

Improving Service Quality in the Ontario Government

**A WORKBOOK FOR THE
ONTARIO PUBLIC SERVICE**

FEBRUARY 1993



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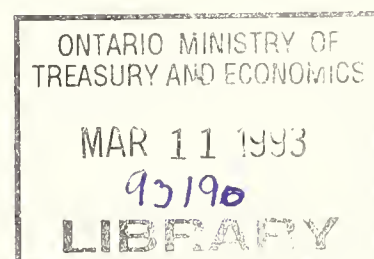
 Ontario

Management Board Secretariat

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Improving Service Quality

A Workbook for the Ontario Public Service





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Preface

We work in challenging times in government today - where balancing the high demand for our services with limited resources has become more difficult than ever. As a result, there is a no more important task today than improving the quality of the services we provide to our customers - whether they are members of the public or our colleagues within government.

In 1991, the Ontario government's Customer Service Task Force published a research report - *Best Value for Tax Dollars - Improving Service Quality in the Ontario Public Service*. It pointed out that our customers and colleagues saw many opportunities for improved service across the Ontario government. From my own perspective, it made me realize that we all need to do work differently - not just more with less, but differently if we are going to improve our service image.

Improving Service Quality in the Ontario Public Service - A Workbook was developed in response to your requests for practical tools to assist employees in doing things differently and improving service quality. It was designed by an interministerial team led by the Customer Service Task Force and Management Board Secretariat's Strategic Education and Development Branch. Its format is designed to help you learn more about the "how" of improving service quality with a step by step, practical application of a continuous improvement method.

The outline of a continuous improvement process was presented in the Customer Service Task Force Report. We have expanded this information and also present information about "fictional" improvement team that itself goes through each step of the method. We hope this gives you more practical information about each step along the way to service quality.

Your request for this workbook demonstrates your interest in and willingness to look at ways to improve your service quality. I wish you well in your efforts - I know that they won't always be easy. Indeed the analytical methods described in this workbook will require rigorous and intense consideration.

I hope in providing you with this workbook, we have played a part in helping you in your service quality improvement efforts. With the creativity and dedication that exists throughout the public service, I know the Ontario public service can be a leader in service quality.



Valerie Gibbons

**Chair, Customer Service Task Force
Secretary, Management Board of Cabinet**

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Introducing the Workbook

Our willingness to change is on the rise, everyone is talking about service quality. We can accomplish amazing things together, the time is now.

*Best Value for Tax Dollars - Improving
Service Quality in the Ontario Government¹*

What Is This Workbook About?

Improving Service Quality: A Workbook for the Ontario Public Service builds and expands on the tools and strategies described in the Customer Service Task Force Report: *Best Value for Tax Dollars: Improving Service Quality in the Ontario Government*. It gives management and staff a practical approach to improving service quality by improving the service process.

Since poor design of service processes is a major cause of quality problems, this workbook emphasizes evaluating and improving service processes, not evaluating the people providing a service. Making service processes more effective and efficient will result in improved service at a lower cost. This workbook will help you look at your existing service processes rather than rethinking your whole service function or business.

The improvement method outlined is generic. Management and staff can apply it in a variety of Ontario Public Service workplaces and service processes.

Who Is This Workbook For?

This workbook is for managers and employee improvement teams or work groups who will be working towards improving service quality in their ministries.

How Do You Use This Workbook?

Improving Service Quality: A Workbook for the Ontario Public Service has two main parts:

- a description of each step in the improvement method;
- worksheets to assist you in your own improvement project.

The workbook has six chapters, integrated worksheets and appendices. Each chapter builds on the material presented in the preceding chapter. Each chapter begins with the:

- **input** or what you will need before you begin;
- **process** or what steps you will follow;
- **output** or what results you will achieve.

Each chapter describes the steps in the improvement method and gives you the problem-solving tools to apply at each step.

Working With a Fictional Improvement Team

To show you how to apply the steps in the improvement method, the workbook describes the activities of a Fictional Improvement Team. You will be following the Fictional Improvement Team as it improves service quality by using the methods described in this workbook. The **Activity Sheets** interspersed throughout the workbook represent the team's steps as it applies the improvement methods.

Since many government services perform a registration function, the Fictional Improvement Team will use the workbook method to identify and solve problems related to its registration services.

Each ***Working With the Fictional Improvement Team*** section is followed by a section called ***What about you?***

What about you? gives you instructions to follow in your own improvement efforts.

Where Are You Now in Your Improvement Efforts?

To determine where you are now in your efforts to improve service quality, answer the questions below. Answer each question 1 to 5, based on how true the statement is.

To what extent is each statement true of your service?				
1 Not true	2 Somewhat true	3 Fairly true	4 Quite true	5 Very true
▶ I know who my customers and suppliers are.				()
▶ I have direct, regular feedback from customers on the quality of my services.				()
▶ My work group has set targets for quality service.				()
▶ All work groups have standardized improvements to service quality.				()
▶ I receive regular feedback on my own performance and the performance of my work group.				()
▶ I am actively involved in efforts to improve service quality.				()
▶ My work group uses a systematic approach to improving service quality.				()
▶ My manager trains me in how to improve service quality.				()
▶ My performance evaluations and ongoing recognition emphasize service quality.				()
▶ My senior manager leads the process to improve service quality.				()
Total:				()

Add up your scores.

10 - 25

great opportunities ahead

26 - 40

making progress

41 - 50

great and getting better

Service Quality and Improvements to the Service Process

Service quality is the result of a chain of events. There is a backward chain from the external customer through the organization. We must understand the requirements of our customers to ensure linkages throughout the organization. Internal customer service is important because everyone has a customer. High quality service requires understanding and co-operation across different departments. In the quality chain, everyone is both a customer and a supplier. Internally the next person in the process is your customer. You are their supplier. You are also someone else's customer because they supply you with their work.

*Best Value for Tax Dollars – Improving
Service Quality in the Ontario Government²*

What is service quality?

Service quality means giving service to customers that meets their needs. According to the Customer Service Task Force research, this means delivering timely, reliable, responsive, accessible and cost effective service to your customers. It also means involving employees in continuous efforts to improve service quality for customers.

What is a service process?

A service process is a systematic series of activities designed to reach a specific goal. A service process:

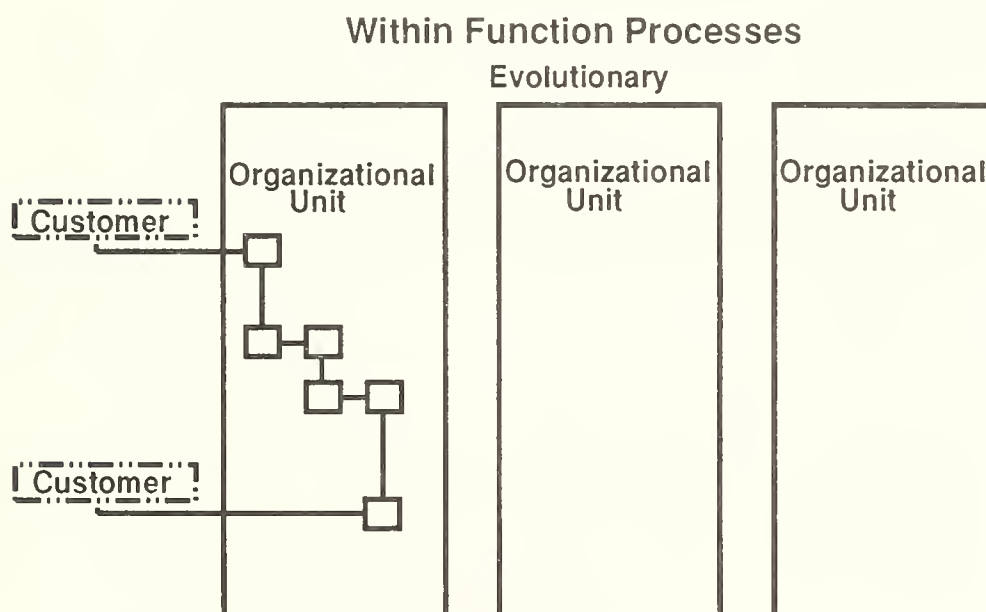
- begins with **input** from suppliers or customers;
- adds value through each step (**process**);
- ends with the desired goals or **output**.

Within-function and cross-functional processes

There are two types of service processes. The first type involves processes which occur within a function. **Within-function** processes have a major effect on service quality. For example, human resources activities and tasks involved in classifying a position would be an example of a within-function process.

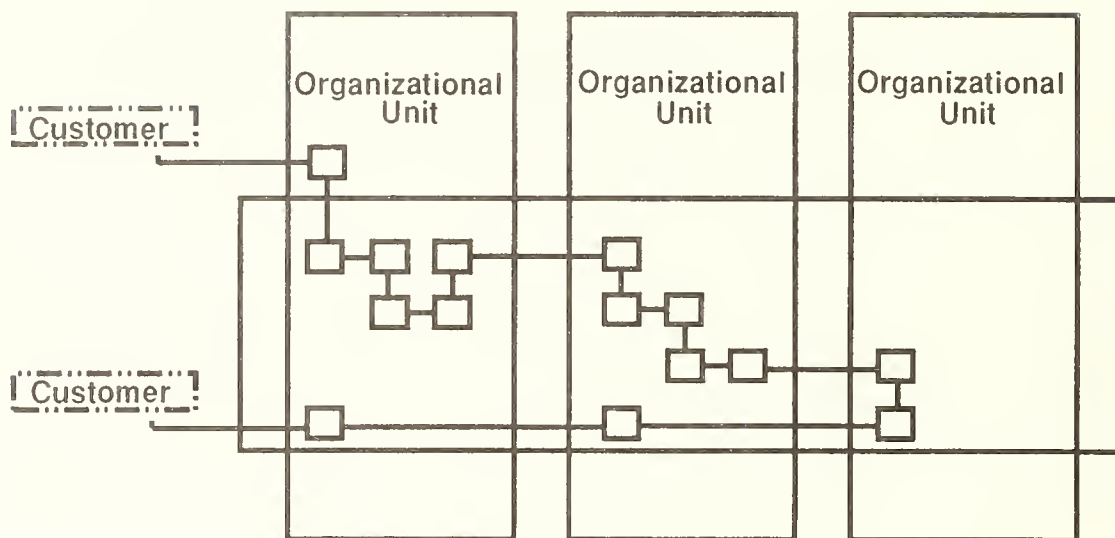
The second type involves processes which cut across several functions. **Cross-functional** processes have a major effect on the way government does business. For example, a cross-functional process might be the recruitment and selection of staff which includes classifying the position, posting the position, screening applicants, interviewing candidates and offering the job to an applicant.

To improve cross-functional processes, senior management must make a major commitment to the improvement process. This commitment often involves major policy and budgetary changes and usually takes place over a long time frame. Changes in cross-functional processes can be revolutionary.



Cross-Functional Processes

Revolutionary



Service quality improvement

Constant improvement is management's responsibility. Most causes of low quality and productivity belong to the system.

*W. Edwards Deming*³

The improvement process described in this workbook uses a systems approach to prevent and eliminate problems with service quality. The method is both a philosophy and a set of problem-solving tools. It is based on a long-term commitment to giving service quality and continuously improving it. The focus is on:

- researching customer requirements;
- developing strategic measures of service quality;
- understanding, simplifying and improving service processes.

People make the difference

Involving employees is key to improving service quality. Our improvement method is designed to involve service providers in:

- assessing customers' expectations and requirements;
- analyzing service processes;
- developing and implementing improvements within policy and budget;
- making recommendations for improvements which require policy or budget changes.

Being successful in your efforts to improve service quality requires an on-going commitment to finding better ways of doing business.

How do you introduce improvements to service quality?

You can introduce service quality improvement in two ways:

- **top-down**, in which a senior manager sponsors a project to improve service quality;
- **bottom-up**, in which any employee can suggest ways to improve service quality.

While both approaches must work together, it is management's responsibility to lead efforts to improve service quality. For service quality to improve, customers, employees and suppliers must be involved in the team process.

Goals to Improve Service Quality

The Ontario Public Service has two major goals in improving service quality:

- meeting customer requirements;
- providing the best value for tax dollars.

We can reach these goals by reducing and, if possible, eliminating:

- delays;
- errors;
- non-responsiveness;
- inaccessibility of a unit or too many contacts;
- waste.

The Service Quality Improvement Process

The improvement process consists of six major steps.

- ▶ 1. Organizing your improvement project
- ▶ 2. Assessing customer requirements
- ▶ 3. Analyzing current processes
- ▶ 4. Developing process improvements
- ▶ 5. Implementing process improvements
- ▶ 6. Continuously improving

These six steps are described in the six chapters in this workbook. We have included an outline of each of these steps at the beginning of each chapter and in the summary at the end of each chapter.

The Service Quality Improvement Process described in this workbook has been effective in a wide variety of settings. These include services delivered to the public as well as internal functions such as purchasing and internal audit.

Balancing day-to-day operations with developmental activity

It is a major challenge to balance day-to-day operations with developmental activities. *Improving Service Quality: A Workbook for the Ontario Public Service* describes an integrated and systematic method an improvement team can complete fairly quickly. The actual time will depend on such matters as:

- the scope and complexity of the process;
- the number of stakeholders and customers who need to define their requirements;
- the amount of time an improvement team has to devote to the improvement efforts.

We advise you to be practical and results-oriented. Focus on "early wins". You should also make sure many employees have the opportunity to work on the improvement project.

The Service Quality Model

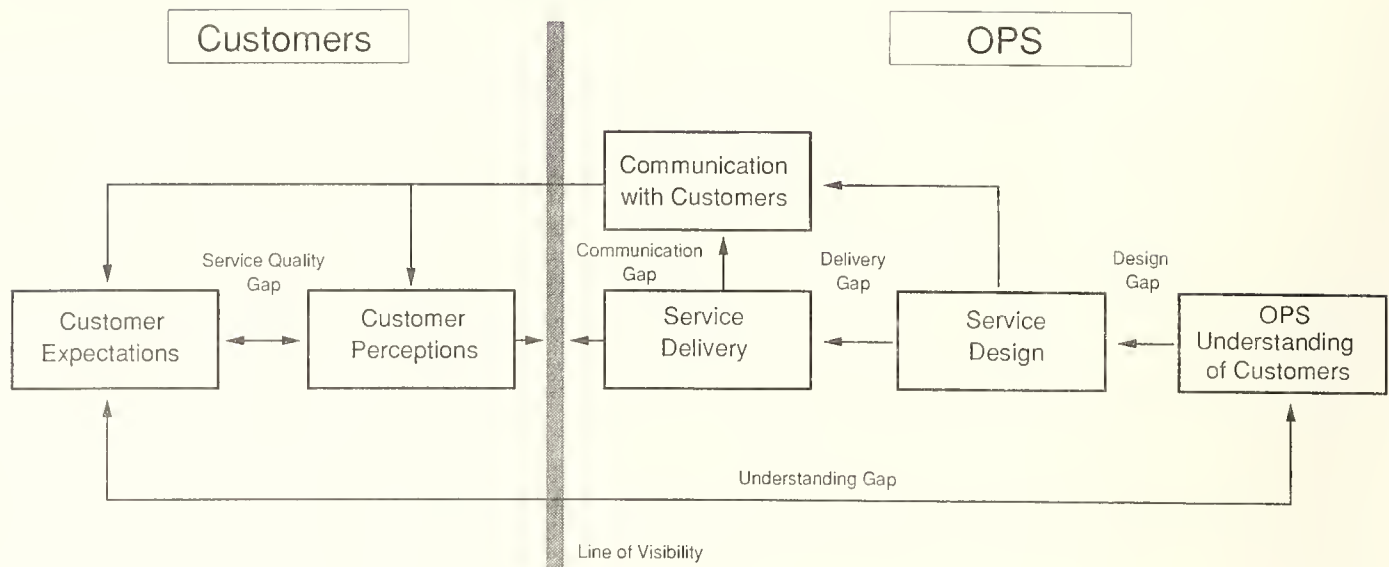
We have adapted our Service Quality Model from the work of Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry⁴. The model represents the key components of the service experience from both the customers' and government's perspectives.

In the diagram on the next page, the two left boxes, **customer expectations** and **customer perceptions**, represent the customers' expectations and perceptions of the service they get from the OPS. The four right boxes represent the OPS's **understanding of the customers**, **service design**, **service delivery** and **communication with customers**.

A "line of visibility" separates the views of the customer from those of the OPS. The customer sees little of the "behind the scenes" processes and policies that affect the quality of service.

Customers can describe what is important to them and how satisfied they are with service, but they cannot tell you how to "fix the system". However, customers can help you identify the best opportunities for service improvement.

A Service Quality Model

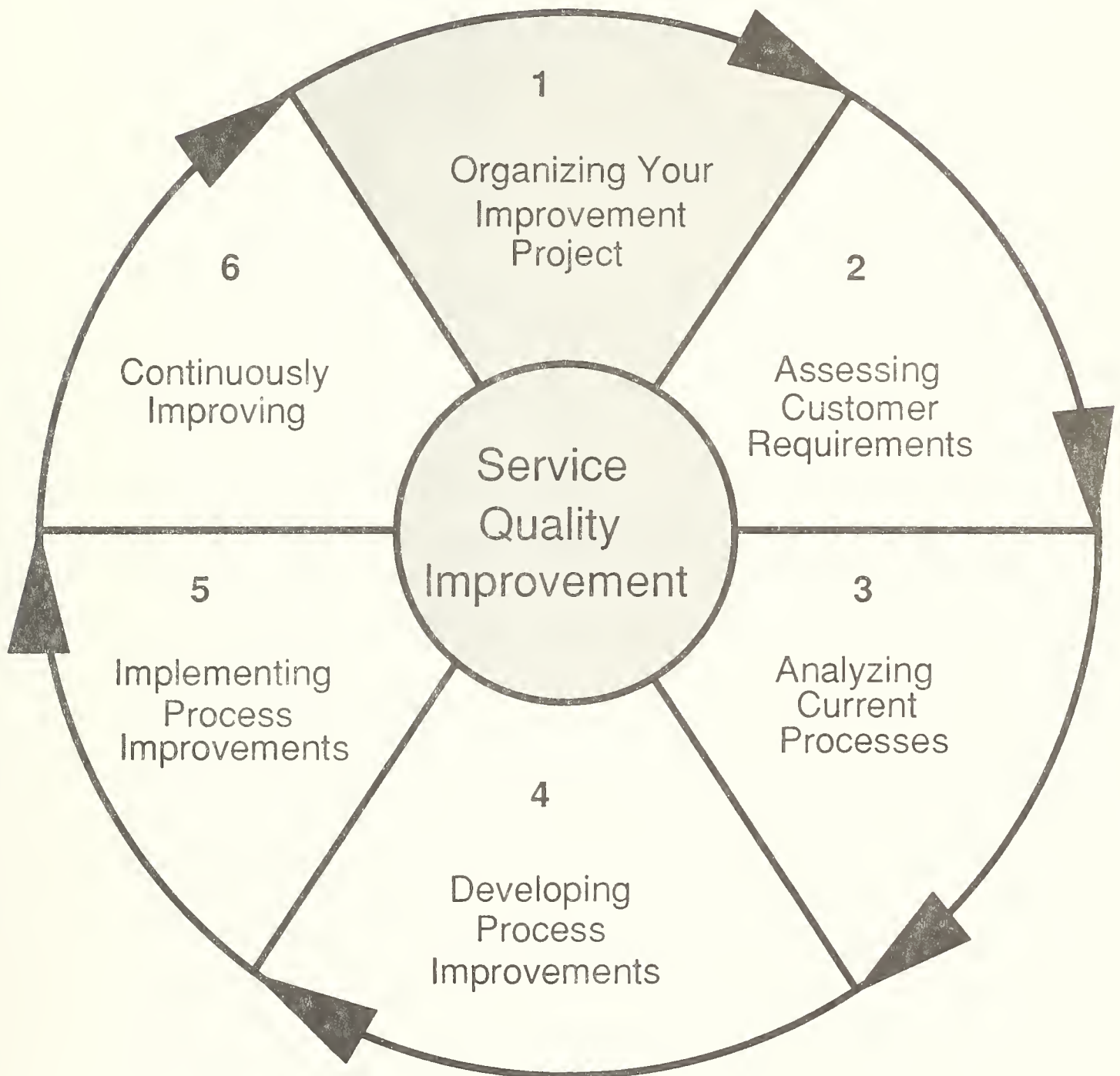


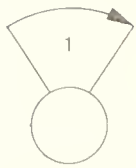
When does a Service Quality Gap exist?

A Service Quality Gap is the difference between your customers' expectations of service quality and their perceptions of the service they get. Four major factors contribute to a Service Quality Gap:

- an Understanding Gap or the difference between your customers' views and your views about service quality;
- a Design Gap or the difference between your customers' requirements and the capability of the service design to meet those needs;
- a Delivery Gap or the difference between how your service system is designed to operate and how the services are actually delivered;
- a Communication Gap or the difference between the service you actually deliver and your communications to customers about your service capabilities.

Organizing Your Improvement Project





CHAPTER ONE

Organizing Your Improvement Project

To begin Chapter One, you need:

Input a commitment to improving service quality.

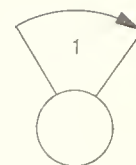
In this chapter, you will learn how to:

Process

- 1.1 select a key service to improve;
- 1.2 define the roles and responsibilities of management;
- 1.3 define the scope of the service process;
- 1.4 form your improvement team;
- 1.5 orient your improvement team.

By the end of Chapter One, you will be able to:

Output clearly define your improvement goal and mandate;
 form and orient your improvement team.



1.1 Selecting a Key Service to Improve

Selecting your first service to improve is a very strategic decision and takes a lot of effort. However, it does not have to be a great undertaking. You should look for "early wins". As in all other stages in the improvement process, it is important to get employee input in selecting the service.

To select your first service to improve, think about all the services of your unit. Which services are the most problematic, costly or time-consuming?

Evaluating Your Services

Evaluate each of the services in your unit in terms of the following criteria:

- **What will be the effect on service quality and government priorities if you improve this service?**

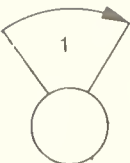
Begin with a service where improvement supports customer, ministry and government priorities.

- **How serious are the quality problems associated with this service?**

How urgent is it for you to settle these problems? Begin with a service where quality problems are clearly recognized. Select a service where service providers require little convincing about quality problems and potential opportunities.

- **How possible or practical is it to try to change this service?**

Is it within the control of your service unit, the ministry, the government or some shared jurisdiction? Begin with a service over which you have the greatest control.



► **How many resources does the service use?**

How much money and how many people will you need to improve the service significantly? Is it manageable within current budgets? Begin with a service for which you have the resources to create an improvement team and make the needed changes.

► **How long will it take to make the improvements?**

How visible will the improvements be? Can you make significant progress in three to six months? Begin with a service where you can have early improvements.

► **Will improvement show management's commitment to action?**

Begin with a service where customers and employees will be able to see improvements.

► **Can other parts of your organization learn from this improvement?**

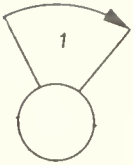
Begin with a service that others within your organization will see as relevant to their own situations.

Working with the Fictional Improvement Team

Because it was having a lot of problems in service quality, the Fictional Improvement Team decided to improve one of its services.

What triggered the situation?

Due to changes in legislation, one of the government's registration offices was besieged by customers. The customers were experiencing long delays in getting service. They were having to make more than one visit to the office because they did not have the right registration documents.



The registration office (service provider) was both overwhelmed by so many new customers and frustrated by its inability to solve the resulting problems. The problems ranged from customer line-ups to the staff's inability to complete even simple transactions quickly and efficiently due to a lack of administrative and technical support. Staff morale was low because of the high volume of work and increasing criticism from the media.

Customers were unclear

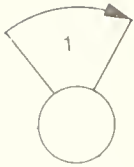
Customers were not clear about the changes to the legislation and staff time was often spent clarifying customers' understanding of their input to the registration process. Customers did not know how long it would take to register or where they should go for what they needed. Employees themselves did not always clearly understand the new policies. As a result, they often gave inconsistent information to customers. Clearly, their service quality had to improve.

We will be following the Fictional Improvement Team as it improves service quality by using the methods described in this workbook. The **Activity Sheets** interspersed throughout the workbook will represent the team's steps in applying the methods.

The team selected an initial service to improve

Look at **Activity Sheet 1** below. The Fictional Improvement Team used this activity sheet to list its major services or functions.

Activity Sheet 1 - List your major services or functions.	
1.	Registration
2.	Inquiries
3.	Administration
4.	Technical Support Services



Look at **Activity Sheet 2** below. The Fictional Improvement Team used this sheet to evaluate each of its major services or functions.

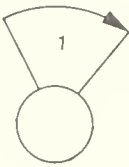
Activity Sheet 2 - Evaluate each major service or function.				
Criteria * reversed rating	Major Services			
	Registration	Inquiries	Administration	Technical Support
Effect (if service improved) on service quality and priorities	3	2	1	2
Seriousness of problem	3	1	2	2
Possible/practical to improve	3	2	3	2
Resources required *	2	1	2	1
Time required to make improvements *	3	1	3	1
Management's commitment to action is visible	3	2	1	3
Others can learn from this improvement	3	2	3	3
Total	20	11	15	14

High = 3

Medium = 2

Low = 1

The higher the score, the more the service is a candidate for your initial improvement efforts. Based on the above scores, the Fictional Improvement Team decided it should improve its **registration service** first.



What about you?

Look at **Worksheet 1** and **Worksheet 2** in the **Worksheets Section** at the back of this workbook.

Using **Worksheet 1**, page 134, list your major services or functions. Using **Worksheet 2**, page 135, evaluate each service or function. You will then be able to select an initial service to improve.

1.2 Defining the Roles and Responsibilities of Management

Improvement is everybody's responsibility, but success requires management support and leadership. Management can:

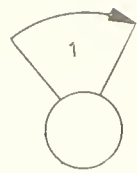
- identify which services will most affect strategic issues;
- select services to improve by balancing the efforts required with the potential opportunities;
- form and train teams of employees to work toward improving the selected services.

Management Sponsors and Process Owners

Management sponsors and process owners play key roles in improving service quality.

What is a management sponsor?

A management sponsor is a manager who has identified an opportunity for improvement and is prepared to lead, support and sponsor improvement efforts.



A management sponsor's level depends on the scope and effect of the selected service. If the project is cross-functional, the management sponsor should be a senior manager who has both the credibility and ability to influence peers and superiors.

In addition, a management sponsor should control the resources and have the responsibility for the results associated with the process. She or he should be able to make the required changes.

What is a process owner?

A process owner is the person who has control of a process and who is responsible for the results or output. A process owner may also be the management sponsor or may report to the management sponsor.

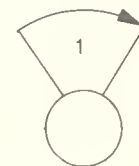
Responsibilities of the management sponsor or process owner

Harrington⁵ has identified a number of responsibilities for the management sponsor or process owner including:

- selecting and defining the initial service for improvement;
- defining the scope of the service process;
- making sure employees get involved;
- defining the improvement team's mandate and measures of success;
- forming the improvement team;
- orienting the improvement team.

The management sponsor should clearly define management's goals such as improving response time, improving reliability, increasing responsiveness, improving access and reducing administrative costs.

Goals should also be quantified, when possible. For example, by improving the service, your unit will improve response time by 50%. Or, by improving the service, your unit will reduce administrative costs by 60%.



Are identified issues within the management sponsor's policy or budget?

In identifying needed improvements, issues will be identified which are within the management sponsor's authority in terms of policy and budget. The management sponsor can act directly upon these issues and undertake improvements without further approval.

At the same time, issues will be identified that are not within the sponsor's policy or budget. The management sponsor will promote these policy and budget issues to peers, superiors or other jurisdictions.

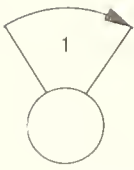
1.3 Defining the Scope of the Service Process

The management sponsor is responsible for selecting the key service to improve and for defining the scope of the process or processes to be improved within that service.

In a complex service, many processes are interwoven and it is often not clear where one process ends and another begins. The key is for the sponsor to define manageable limits.

1.4 Forming Your Improvement Team

The management sponsor selects the improvement team, including the team leader and team members. The improvement team is a time-limited work group with a special purpose. The sponsor must make sure the team's mandate is balanced and aligned with overall ministry and government directions. She or he must also ensure that service improvements complement other ministry and government functions.



The improvement team should include representatives from all affected parts of the organization and a significant proportion of "front-line" employees.

Selecting a Team Leader

The management sponsor should appoint a team leader based on the person's:

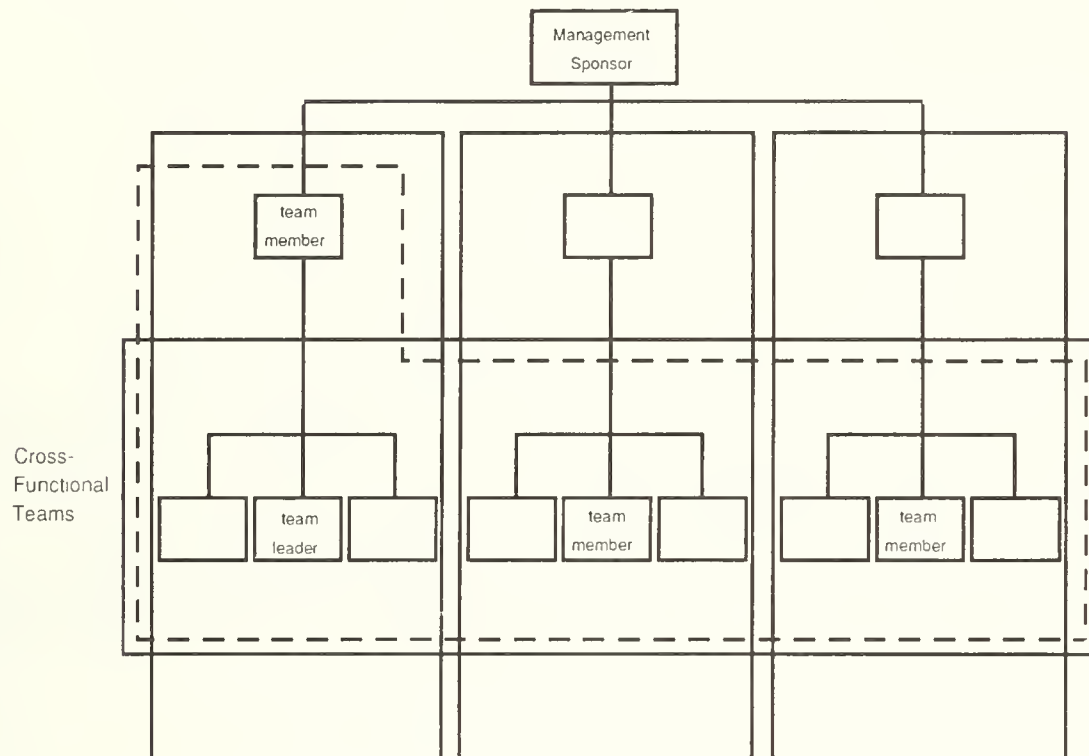
- knowledge of the service process;
- comprehensive knowledge of methods to improve processes;
- leadership and team work skills;
- project management and organizational skills.

The role of the team leader is to:

- manage the efforts of the improvement team;
- guide the team as it applies the improvement method;
- act as a communication link between the sponsor and the team.

In the case of a team that will look at a cross-functional process, the team leader does not have to be at a higher level than team members.

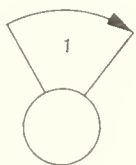
The Project Structure



Selecting Team Members

With input from the process owner and team leader, the management sponsor should select team members based on their:

- detailed knowledge of the service process;
- interest in the project;
- ability to represent all functions in the service process;
- ability to work constructively as team members.



The role of team members is to:

- assess customer expectations and requirements;
- analyze current service processes;
- develop improvements to the service process;
- support improvements in their work groups.

Using an Outside Facilitator

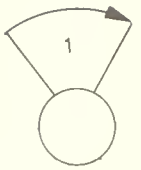
It may also be useful to use an outside facilitator in certain situations. For example, you may need a neutral and objective person to guide the improvement team through its first improvement efforts.

The outside facilitator should have an in-depth understanding of methods to improve service and team-building skills. She or he does not need to know about the identified service process beforehand.

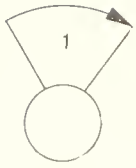
1.5 Orienting Your Improvement Team

The management sponsor should formally orient the improvement team by:

- describing the service and processes targeted for improvement;
- giving team members relevant documents including a message about the team mandate and its goal;
- identifying expected project outcomes and measures of success, quantified where possible;
- telling members how the improvement project links to other ministry and government initiatives;



- verifying the team's understanding of its role;
- giving an overview of the method to improve service quality and the supporting tools;
- presenting a project plan and a timeline;
- developing ground rules for how the team will function.



Summary

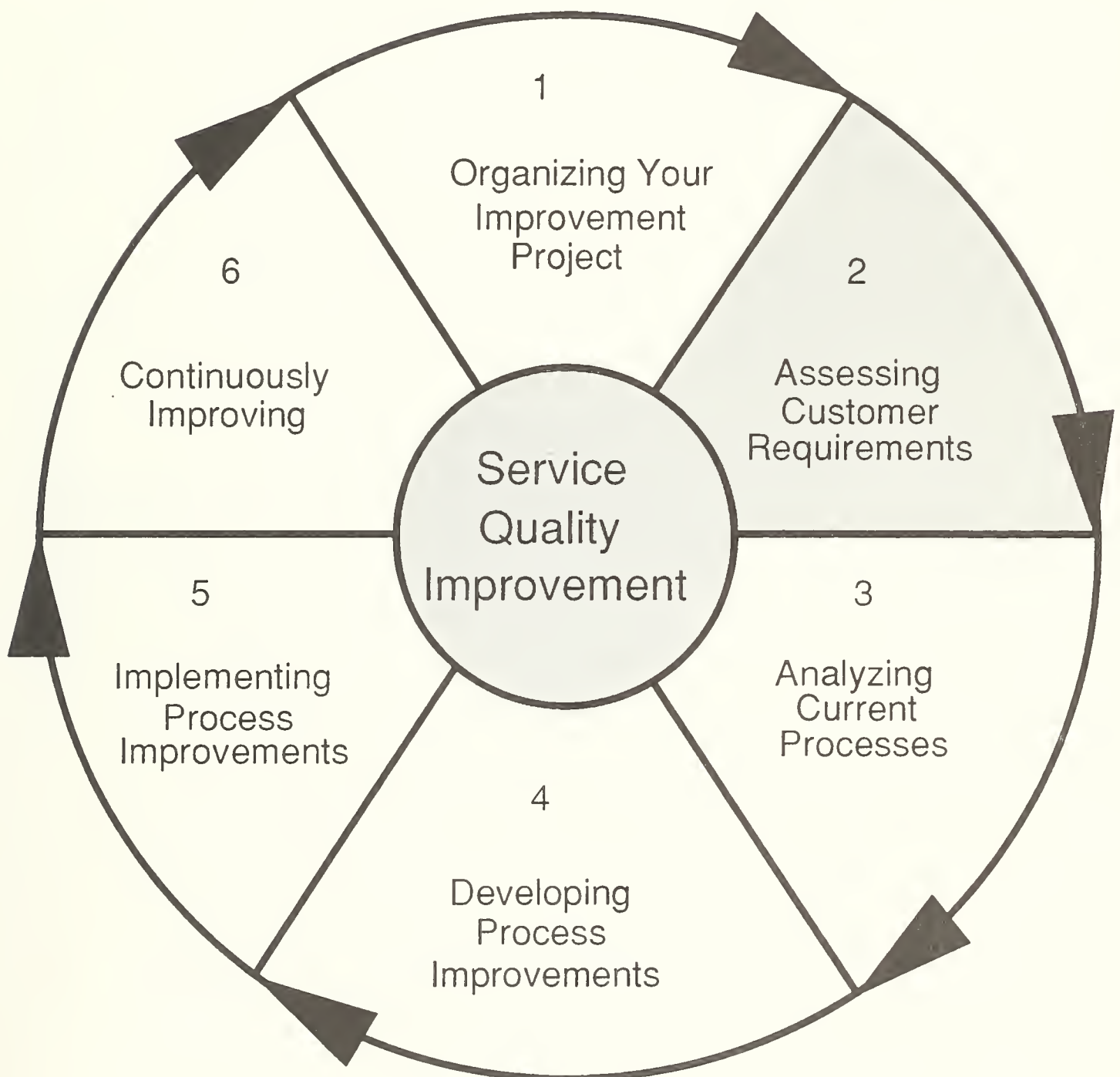
In Chapter One, we have described how to:

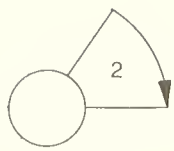
- 1.1 select a key service to improve;
- 1.2 define the roles and responsibilities of management;
- 1.3 define the scope of the service process;
- 1.4 form your improvement team;
- 1.5 orient your improvement team.

Output A clearly defined improvement goal and mandate.

An improvement team you have formed and oriented.

Assessing Customer Requirements





CHAPTER TWO

Assessing Customer Requirements

To begin Chapter Two you need:

Input a clearly defined improvement goal and mandate;
an improvement team you have formed and oriented.

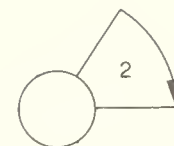
In this chapter, you will learn how to:

Process

- 2.1 identify your customers and your suppliers;
- 2.2 determine what is important to your customers and how they perceive your service;
- 2.3 identify your Service Quality Gaps;
- 2.4 research customer expectations and their perceptions of service quality;
- 2.5 determine your customers' requirements and measures for service quality;
- 2.6 close the Understanding Gap;
- 2.7 identify the best opportunities for improvement.

By the end of Chapter Two, you will be able to:

Output list your customers and their requirements and measures of service quality;
select the best opportunities for improvement.



2.1 Identifying Your Customers and Your Suppliers

The first task in every effort to improve service quality is to understand who your customers and your suppliers are.

What Is a Customer?

You are a **customer** when you get material or information from others in your organization or from an outside source. In other words, you receive the **output** or product of someone else's work. Customers may be the final consumer, user, receiver or purchaser of the material, information or service. Customers can be internal (other employees of the Ontario Public Service) or external (members of the public).

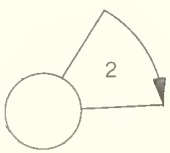
As many Ontario Public Service (OPS) units and organizations have a variety of customers, it is often difficult to determine if customers are internal or external.

What Is a Service?

The Oxford Dictionary⁶ defines a **service** as "a system or arrangement that performs work for customers or supplies public needs".

Services are different from manufacturing in that:

- the customer is directly part of the process;
- services are produced and consumed on the spot;
- customers are concerned about both process and product;
- services are usually produced by people, not machines, so variability is much harder to control.



What Is a Supplier?

You are a **supplier** when you provide material, information, or services to others in your organization or to an external customer. In a service process, the supplier of the inputs may also be the external customer. The materials or information you receive as a supplier are your **input**. The materials, information or services you provide to others as a supplier are your **output**.

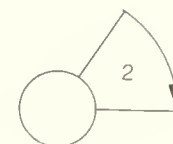
As a supplier of services to others, you need to:

- understand your customers' needs;
- understand your customers' criteria for quality;
- communicate with your customers to make sure they understand what your service can do, so they can participate more effectively and have realistic expectations;
- negotiate a specific service agreement, where possible;
- keep your part of the agreement by delivering service that meets your customers' requirements;
- get on-going feedback from your customers on your performance so you can identify opportunities for improvement;
- communicate with your customers to identify new or emerging customer requirements.

Working with your suppliers

As an internal customer, or receiver of services from others in your organization, you are responsible to work with your suppliers to:

- identify your requirements clearly and what will satisfy you;
- negotiate a service agreement which defines both your suppliers' responsibilities and your input to the service process;
- provide needed input;



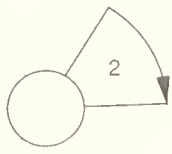
- provide timely and constructive evaluation on the performance of your supplier;
- identify opportunities for improvement.

Working with the Fictional Improvement Team

The Fictional Improvement Team used **Activity Sheet 3** and **Activity Sheet 4** below to identify its customers and suppliers.

Activity Sheet 3 - Identify your customers.	
Output (what you produce)	Those who receive your output (customers)
Customer data	Central data base
Requests for registration document	Central data base and document clerk
Temporary registration documents	Eligible member of the general public

Activity Sheet 4 - Identify your suppliers.	
Input (what you require)	Those who receive your input (suppliers)
Customer data (proof of eligibility)	Eligible members of the general public
	Other ministries and federal government
Registration numbers	Central data base



What about you?

Complete **Worksheet 3** and **Worksheet 4** in the **Worksheets Section** at the back of your workbook.

Using **Worksheet 3**, page 136, identify your customers for the service you selected.

- ▶ List the output your unit produces.
- ▶ List who receives this output (your external and internal customers).

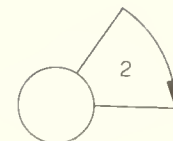
Using **Worksheet 4**, page 137, identify your suppliers for the service you selected.

- ▶ Identify the key input your team requires to provide your service.
- ▶ List the key suppliers of each input.

2.2 Determining What Is Important to Your Customers and How They Perceive Your Service

The strategic direction for service is provided by determining what is most important to customers. Customers must define their requirements. This cannot be determined from inside the organization.

*Best Value for Tax Dollars: Improving
Service Quality in the Ontario Government⁷*



What Is Service Quality?

Service quality means different things to different people. As a service provider you need to learn what service quality means to your customers. After identifying your customers, ask yourself the following questions to determine your customers' definitions of service quality.

- ▶ What is important to our customers?
- ▶ How can we measure service quality?
- ▶ How well are we performing the service?

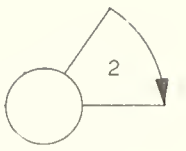
What Is Important to Your Customers?

Ask the customers themselves. Obviously, you can ask your customers many kinds of questions to find out their expectations and requirements. However, the Customer Service Task Force research report⁸ gives you a short-cut. It states that while customers' definitions of service quality may vary, they expect:

- timeliness;
- accessibility;
- reliability;
- responsiveness;
- value for tax dollars.

While there may be other criteria that are important to your particular customers, it is best to start with these basics. The importance attached to each will vary according to the needs of your customers and the kind of services you provide.

You should always confirm the basics with your customers. Ask them their views of the importance of the Service Quality Basics listed on the next page.



Service Quality Basics

Timeliness

- time required to get the service

Accessibility

- number of contacts, locations or people required to complete the transaction
- hours of operation
- understandable spoken and written language
- convenience and design of service location
- choice of service delivery methods such as telephone, mail, in person or by computer

Reliability

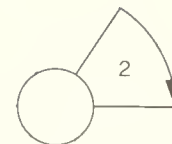
- perceptions of the knowledge and competence of staff
- getting direct answers
- consistent information from one employee to another
- up-to-date, accurate information
- confidentiality

Responsiveness

- clear and easy communication with OPS staff
- courtesy and helpfulness
- staff's understanding of customer needs
- pride of staff in their work
- adaptation to customers' individual needs and circumstances

Cost

- cost of service transaction by type of transaction
- value for tax dollars



How Do Your Customers Rate Your Service Performance?

Determine how your customers rate your service performance on things they believe are most important.

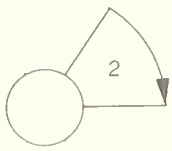
- Do they think your service is fast?
- Do they think employees are responsive?
- Do they think they are getting value for tax dollars?
- Do they think they are getting accurate information?

Only your customers can give you essential information to determine if you are giving service quality. Employees are too subjective in the assessment of their own performance.

2.3 Identifying Service Quality Gaps

What Is a Service Quality Gap?

A Service Quality Gap is the difference between customers' expectations of service quality and their perceptions of the service they receive.

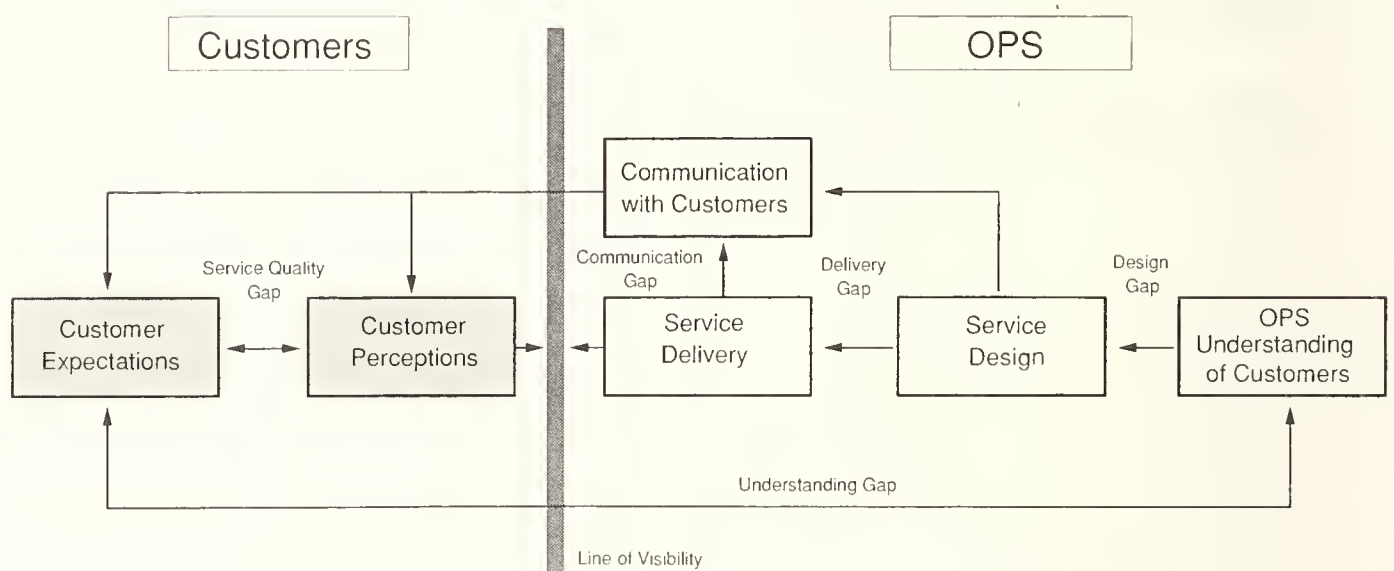


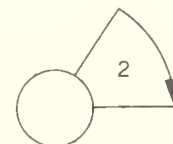
What Can Cause a Service Quality Gap?

Four major factors contribute to a Service Quality Gap:

- an Understanding Gap or the difference between your customers' views and your views about service quality;
- a Design Gap or the difference between your customers' requirements and the capability of the service design to meet those needs;
- a Delivery Gap or the difference between how your system is designed to operate and how the services are actually delivered;
- a Communication Gap or the difference between the service you actually deliver and your communications to customers about your particular service capabilities.

A Service Quality Model





2.4 Researching Customer Expectations and Their Perceptions of Service Quality

Getting Close to Your Customers

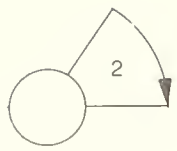
You can use a number of methods to identify what your customers think about your service and what they require from it. Some of the more effective methods are:

- mail surveys;
- telephone surveys;
- in-depth personal interviews;
- customer focus groups;
- suggestion boxes and forms;
- strategic use of complaints;
- customer follow-up.

You can conduct all these methods before, during and after you provide the service. You should select a method best suited to your particular situation and requirements.

Mail surveys

Mail surveys are structured questionnaires sent out on a random basis. For best results, a mail survey should not take any longer than 20-30 minutes to complete. You can use a mail survey to gather information about current satisfaction levels and service basics such as timeliness, reliability, responsiveness, access and cost. You can also use the information to provide a baseline from which to conduct tracking studies.



It is important to develop a statistically valid sample to make generalizations about the total population. The analysis should be sufficiently sophisticated to give reliable conclusions. For best results, you should develop the questionnaire with focus groups of customers or employees. Use plain language.

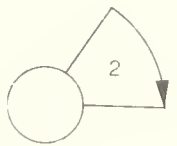
The mail survey used by the Customer Service Task Force with OPS customers is in the Appendix at the back of this workbook. It tested two aspects of the customers' experiences: how important the service element was and how well the OPS was performing the service.

Telephone surveys

A telephone survey is a 30-45 minute interview using a structured questionnaire. Participants are chosen in a random sample and the interview results are compiled to give information. Telephone surveys are not a good method for researching complex issues.

If you are planning to use a survey, use a logical sequence to develop and conduct it.

- ▶ 1. Review existing documents, previous research and complaints.
- ▶ 2. Interview some customers and front-line service providers.
- ▶ 3. Decide on a survey design (telephone or mail).
- ▶ 4. Set up focus groups to pre-test the survey.
- ▶ 5. Conduct and analyze the survey.



In-depth personal interviews

You can interview key customers of your service to get information about the current level of service and customer expectations. All interviews should have the same format and the same questions asked of those interviewed. Personal interviews are highly interactive ways to get feedback from customers. However, they are time consuming and limited in the number of customers you can contact.

Customer focus groups

A focus group is usually a small group of people brought together to discuss a service, product or issue. The group can be homogeneous, such as customers of one ministry, or mixed, such as frontline employees, supervisors and middle managers.

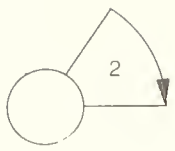
A trained facilitator gets the opinions of participants in the group. You would use this advice for its own purpose or as part of a larger exercise. For example, you might use a focus group to develop a questionnaire for a telephone or mail survey.

Suggestion boxes or forms

Simple questions on a form, given to a customer at the close of a transaction or with a mail-out, can provide current information on customer satisfaction. However, this method only reaches people who are currently part of your customer base.

Strategic use of complaints

When a customer has made a complaint by mail, on the phone or in person, you should collect that information and communicate it to all employees involved. Although you do not get the same depth of information as focus groups and surveys, this inexpensive mechanism can ensure continuous improvement to your process.



Customer follow-up

Decide on a specific time after the service transaction to contact customers to determine if they got the service they expected. **When** you telephone or write to customers will depend on the specific service.

Determining Customers' Reasons for Using Your Service and Their Patterns of Use

When you research your customers' expectations and perceptions of your service, you should also determine their reasons for using your service and their patterns of use.

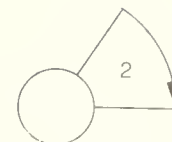
- ▶ Do they use your service for personal or business reasons?
- ▶ Is it usually routine or emergency?
- ▶ Are there particular times of the day, week or month that they are most likely to use your service?
- ▶ Do they usually access your service by mail, by phone or in person?

Working with the Fictional Improvement Team

Look at **Activity Sheet 5** on the next page. When the Fictional Improvement Team researched its customers' expectations of service quality (what they considered important) and their perceptions (performance), it found several Service Quality Gaps. Customers were fairly satisfied with reliability, but not with timeliness, accessibility or responsiveness.

Customers attached low importance to cost because there were no direct fees. If there had been fees, the ratings might have been quite different, given customer dissatisfaction with three out of the five basics.

However, there are always costs, even if they are not visible to the public, and an on-going goal should be to lower the cost of each transaction.



Activity Sheet 5 - Describe the expectations and perceptions of your customers.

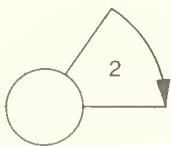
Service

Registration of a temporary document

Service Quality Basics	Customer Expectations	Customer Perceptions
How fast?	high	poor
How reliable?	high	fair
How responsive?	high	poor
How accessible?	high	poor
How much?	low	good

What about you?

Use **Worksheet 5**, page 138, to describe your customers' expectations and perceptions of service quality.



2.5 Determining Your Customers' Requirements and Measures for Service Quality

How Can You Measure Service Quality?

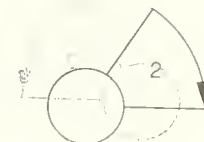
Measuring customer satisfaction is essential to success and must be a priority. Directly measuring what is important to your customers is the most important step in the whole improvement method. Unfortunately, this critical step is frequently overlooked and many efforts to improve service quality fail. Without accurately measuring customer satisfaction, it will be difficult to achieve real improvement and impossible to demonstrate or sustain it.

Think about the following points as you develop your own measurements.

- ▶ Measure what is important to your customers and how well you are doing in those areas.
- ▶ Measurement focuses an organization; measuring the wrong area can focus the organization in the wrong direction.
- ▶ Measurement must be ongoing. Ongoing measurement and feedback will let you correct what you are doing by identifying the differences or gaps between your customers' expectations and your own perceptions of service quality.
- ▶ Establish ways to measure both the process and the output.

Measuring your service can give you essential data to assess how effectively and efficiently you are meeting your customers' requirements for service quality. Have your customers define their requirements for service quality. Ask your customers the following questions:

- ▶ How much time should it take for a completed service? The same day? One week? One month?
- ▶ How responsive should this unit be to individual circumstances? Should we have a standard process or should it be customized for each individual?



- ▶ How many contacts should you have to complete a service?
- ▶ How accessible should your service be? What should the hours of operation be?
- ▶ What should transactions by mail cost? by phone? in person?
- ▶ What other factors are important? How do you measure them?

Although customers are usually reasonable, some customer expectations may not be realistic. In times of constraint, you may even have to reduce your level of service. However, you can still improve service quality by reducing delays, errors and delivery costs. It is essential to inform customers about the capacity of your service.

The example of Canada Post

Canada Post has a standard of 90% on-time delivery within the same urban centre. The standard used to be within 24 hours, but Canada Post has now revised that time frame to two days.

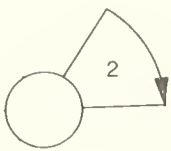
The standard varies further, depending on whether the urban centre is in the same province. The standards may not be as fast as some would like, but at least customers can plan accordingly.

The standard also assumes that the customer has provided the input required such as correct postal code and postage.

Because customers are a direct part of the service process, they must provide correct and complete input to enable you to give quality service.

Working with the Fictional Improvement Team

Look at Activity Sheet 6 on the next page. After conducting its customer research, the Fictional Improvement Team was able to define customers' requirements and measures for service quality.



Activity Sheet 6 - Describe the service quality requirements and measures of your customers.

Service **Registration of a temporary document**

Service Quality Basics	Measures	Requirements
How fast?	Minutes, days, weeks	30 minutes to get a temporary document
How reliable?	Per cent (%) correct	100% correct
How responsive?	Flexibility in choice of service options Individual attention	Get what they want quickly by mail, phone or in-person Flexibility in response to individual circumstances
How accessible?	Number of contacts Closeness (local or central) Hours of operation Languages spoken	One contact Local access Hours (8:00 AM - 6:00 PM, open one evening per week) English and French services
How much?	Cost per transaction Cost per type of transaction	No direct charge Free telephone access

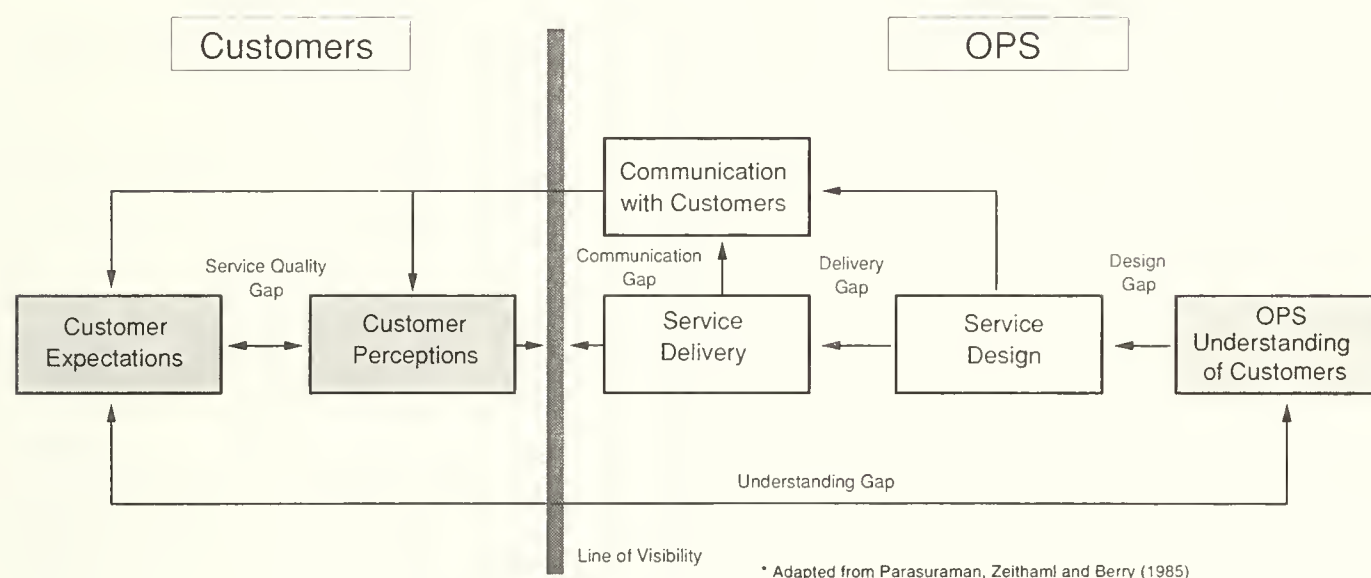
What about you?

Use **Worksheet 6**, page 139, to describe the service quality requirements and measures of your customers.

2.6 Closing the Understanding Gap

Understanding your customers' views affects the entire alignment of your service system.

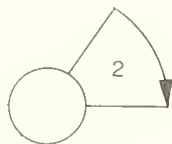
A Service Quality Model



What Is an Understanding Gap?

An Understanding Gap is the difference between your customers' views and your views about the service quality of the Ontario Public Service. You need to ask yourself the following questions.

- ▶ Do you understand what is important to both your external and internal customers?
- ▶ Do you understand how your customers perceive the quality of your service?



Working with the Fictional Improvement Team

Getting close to your customers will enable you to understand their expectations, perceptions and requirements. To do this you must:

- get customers to define their requirements;
- give timely feedback to all staff on what is important to customers and what customers think of their performance.

The Fictional Improvement Team researched both its customers' and employees' views of:

- what was important to them;
- how well the service was performed.

The team discovered that employees understood what was important to its customers. However, employees rated their performance much higher than their customers did.

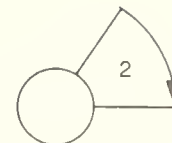
Providing Timely Feedback on Staff Performance

As employees inherently want to do a good job, timely feedback is essential to learning. Having researched your customers' perceptions of service quality and their requirements, you can now give staff constructive feedback that reflects customers' needs.

Without direct feedback from customers, staff may misunderstand customer perceptions of their performance. Then, you can only guess what to focus on for your improvement efforts.

2.7 Identifying the Best Opportunities for Improvement

Once your customer research has identified the service quality expectations, perceptions and requirements of your customers, you can use this information to identify the best opportunities and priorities for improvement.



What Is an Opportunity Matrix?

An Opportunity Matrix is a useful tool for assessing your priorities for service improvement. It allows you to compare customers' expectations about the most important elements of service quality with their perceptions of performance. Comparing this information lets you determine the best opportunities for your improvement efforts. Look at the Opportunity Matrix on page 36.

When does Service Quality exist?

Service quality exists when your customers rate the importance of the service as high and the service provider's performance as good. Customers are getting the best value for tax dollars (**upper right quadrant**).

When does a Service Quality Gap exist?

A Service Quality Gap exists when your customers rate the importance of the service as high and the unit's performance as poor. This gap points to opportunities for improvement where it is most needed (**upper left quadrant**). If your customers perceive a Service Quality Gap, then it is essential to understand the contributing factors.

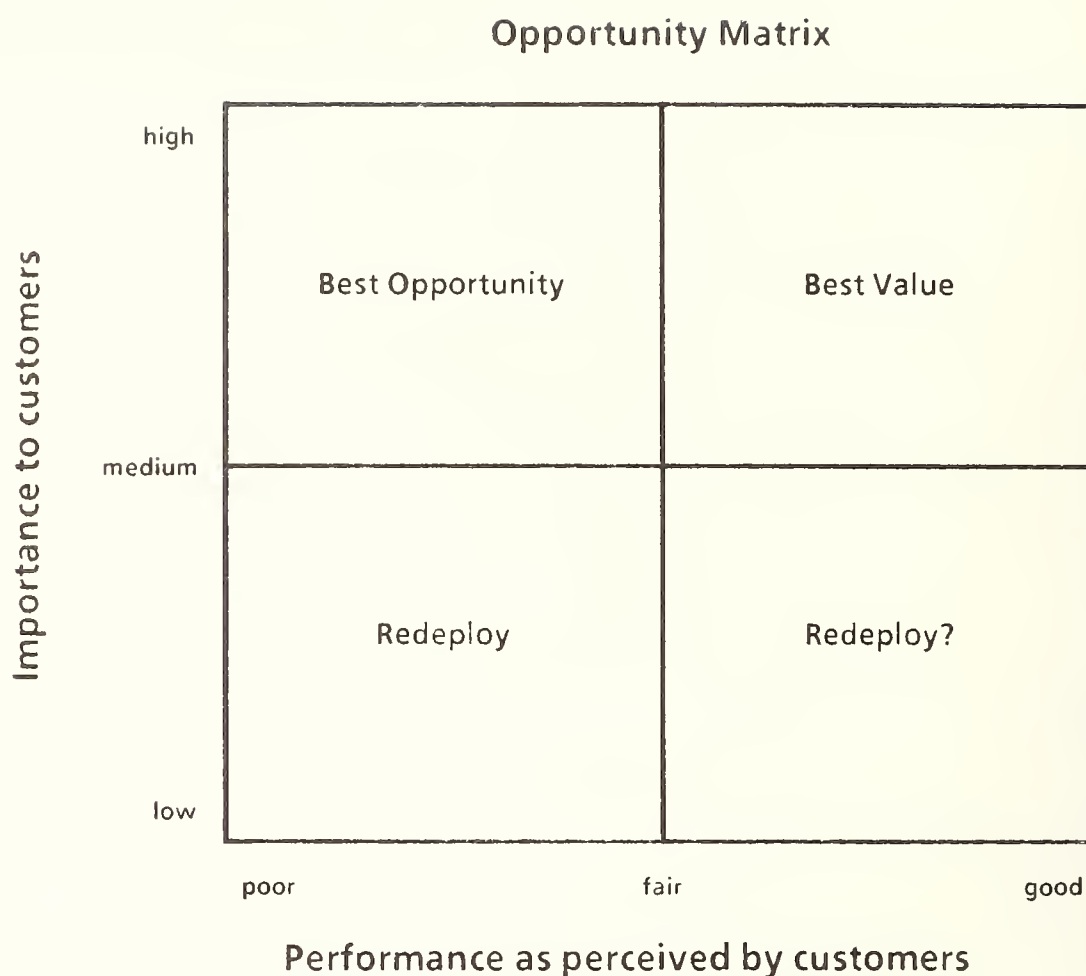
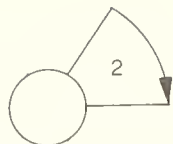
The goal of a service provider should be to deploy resources to concentrate on reducing the Service Quality Gap and improving service quality. This gives the best value for tax dollars.

Identifying opportunities for redeployment

If customers rate the importance of a service as low and a service provider's performance as poor (**lower left quadrant**), this may represent an opportunity to redeploy resources. If the service is not important to customers and the organization is doing a poor job, ask yourself the question:

► Why are we spending scarce resources on this service?

Read the Customer Service Task Force Report, *Best Value for Tax Dollars: Improving Service Quality in the Ontario Government*, for a fuller explanation of the Opportunity Matrix.



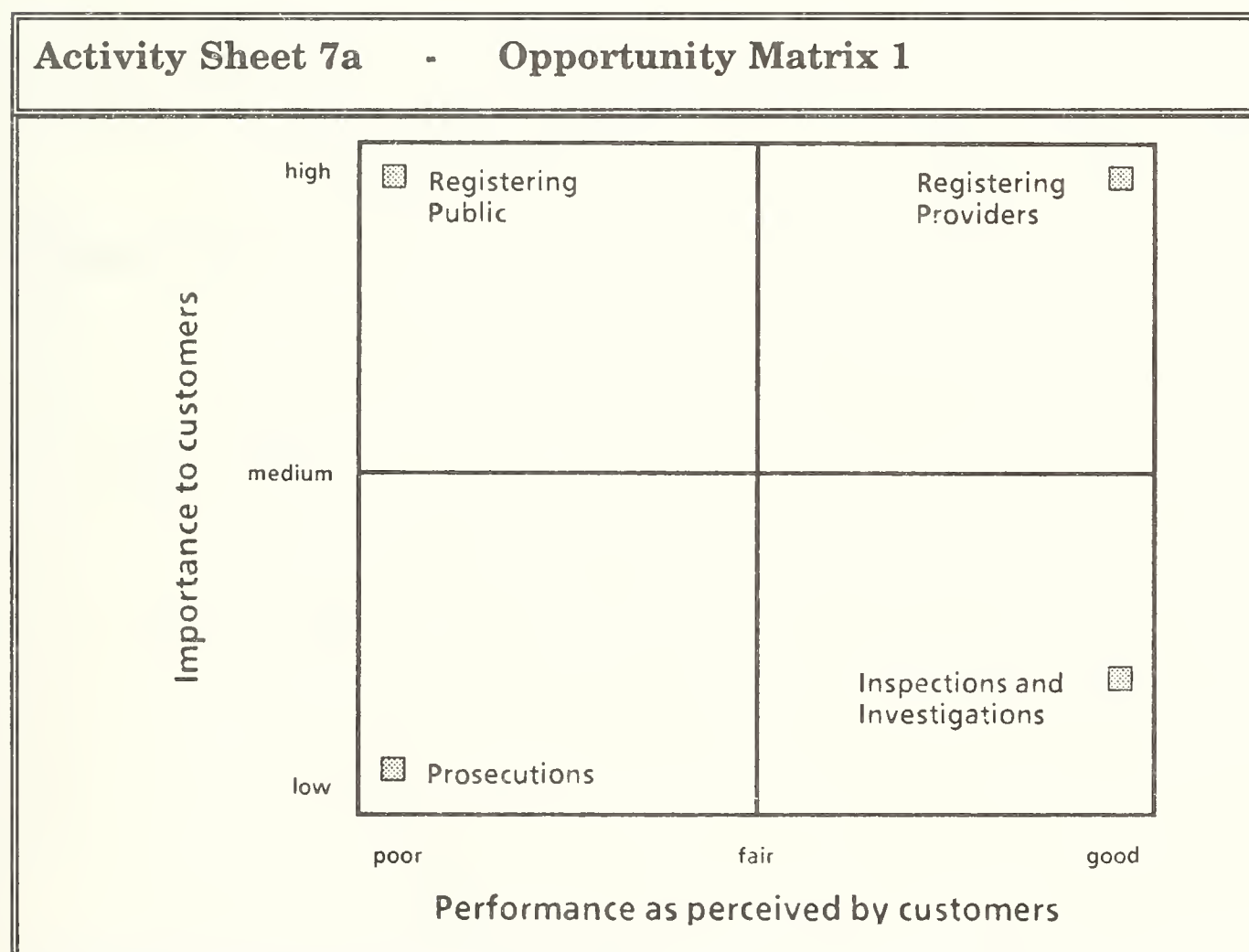
Working with the Fictional Improvement Team

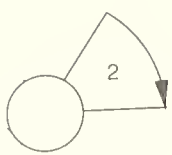
Look at **Activity Sheet 7a, Opportunity Matrix 1**, on the next page. When the Fictional Improvement Team used the Opportunity Matrix, it looked at how customers rated the importance of various service processes and how they rated the performance of the service provider.

- ▶ **Registering Providers:** Customers rated the importance of this service as high and performance as good (**upper right quadrant**). Service quality value is high and the customer is getting value for tax dollars.
- ▶ **Registering the Public:** Customers rated the importance of this service as high and performance as poor (**upper left quadrant**). A Service Quality Gap exists here and points to the best opportunity for improvement.

- **Inspections and Investigations:** Customers rated the importance of this service as low and performance as good (**lower right quadrant**). Based on government priorities, inspections and investigations may be a service that the unit must provide. It may be of critical value to the general public, but not to individual customers.
- **Prosecutions:** This service was not important to customers and the registration unit was doing a poor job at it (**lower left quadrant**). The service providers were probably spending scarce resources on the service. They needed to re-evaluate the service for redeployment of resources.

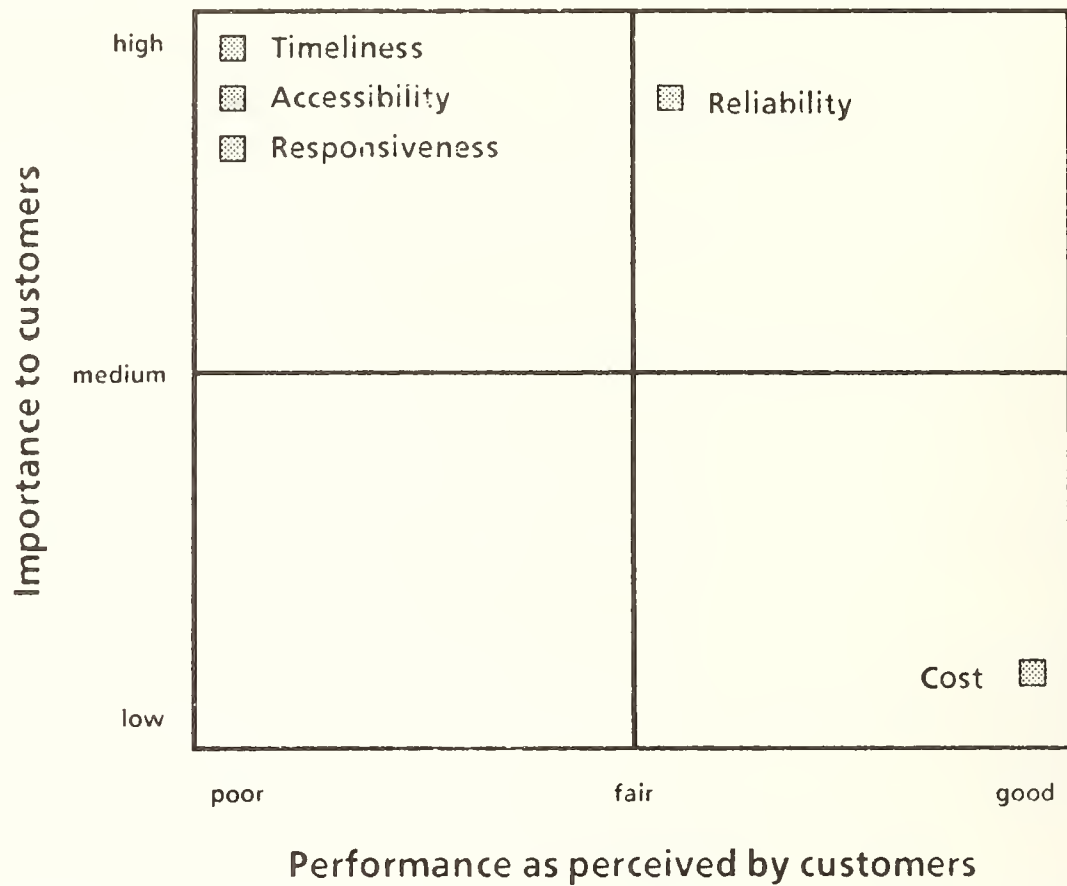
Look at **Activity Sheet 7b, Opportunity Matrix 2** on the next page. In researching customers' expectations and perceptions of performance, the Fictional Improvement Team found several Service Quality Gaps. Customers were fairly satisfied with cost, but not with timeliness, access, responsiveness and reliability. The four gaps pointed to opportunities for improvements where it was most needed.





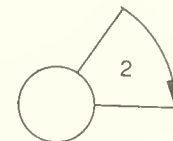
Activity Sheet 7b

Opportunity Matrix 2



What about you?

Use the **Worksheet 7, Opportunity Matrix**, page 140, to identify the best opportunities for improvement in your unit.



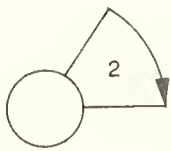
Summary

In Chapter Two, we have described how to:

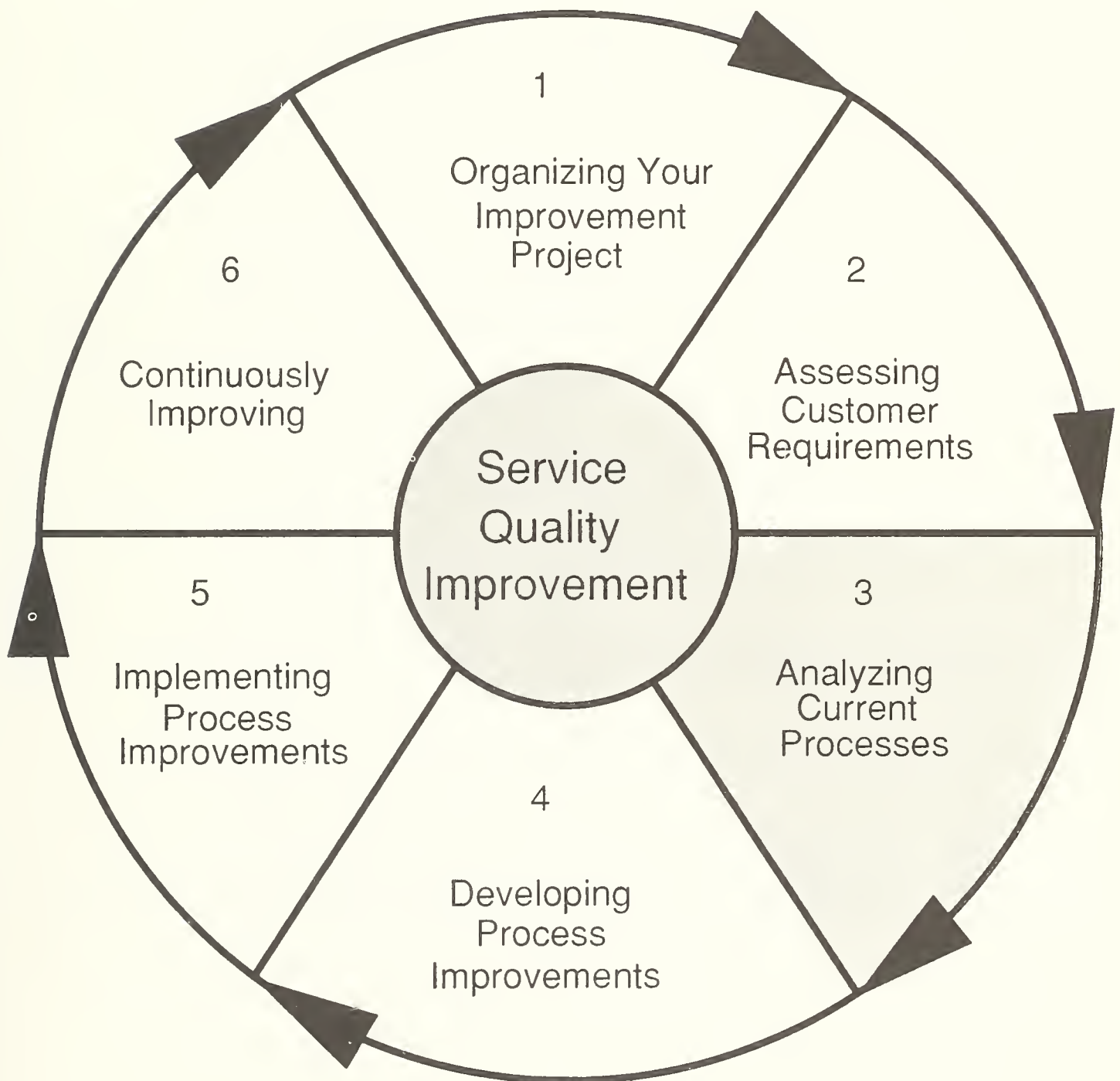
- 2.1 identify your customers and your suppliers;
- 2.2 determine what is important to your customers and how they perceive your service;
- 2.3 identify Service Quality Gaps;
- 2.4 research customer expectations and their perceptions of service quality;
- 2.5 determine your customers requirements and measures for service quality;
- 2.6 close the Understanding Gap;
- 2.7 identify the best opportunities for improvement.

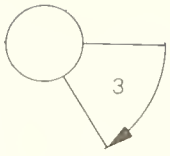
Output A list of your customers and their requirements and measures of service quality.

The best opportunities for improvement.



Analyzing Current Processes





CHAPTER THREE

Analyzing Current Processes

For Chapter Three, you need:

Input a list of your customers and their requirements;
the best opportunities for improvement.

In this chapter, you will learn how to:

Process

- 3.1 analyze the design of your service processes;
- 3.2 list your major service processes;
- 3.3 describe the key activities;
- 3.4 describe the tasks;
- 3.5 create a process path;
- 3.6 set target standards of service.

By the end of Chapter Three, you will be able to:

Output describe your present standards of service;
identify target standards of service based on
customer requirements.

3.1 Analyzing the Design of Your Service Processes

Understanding your existing service processes is one of the key steps towards improving service quality.

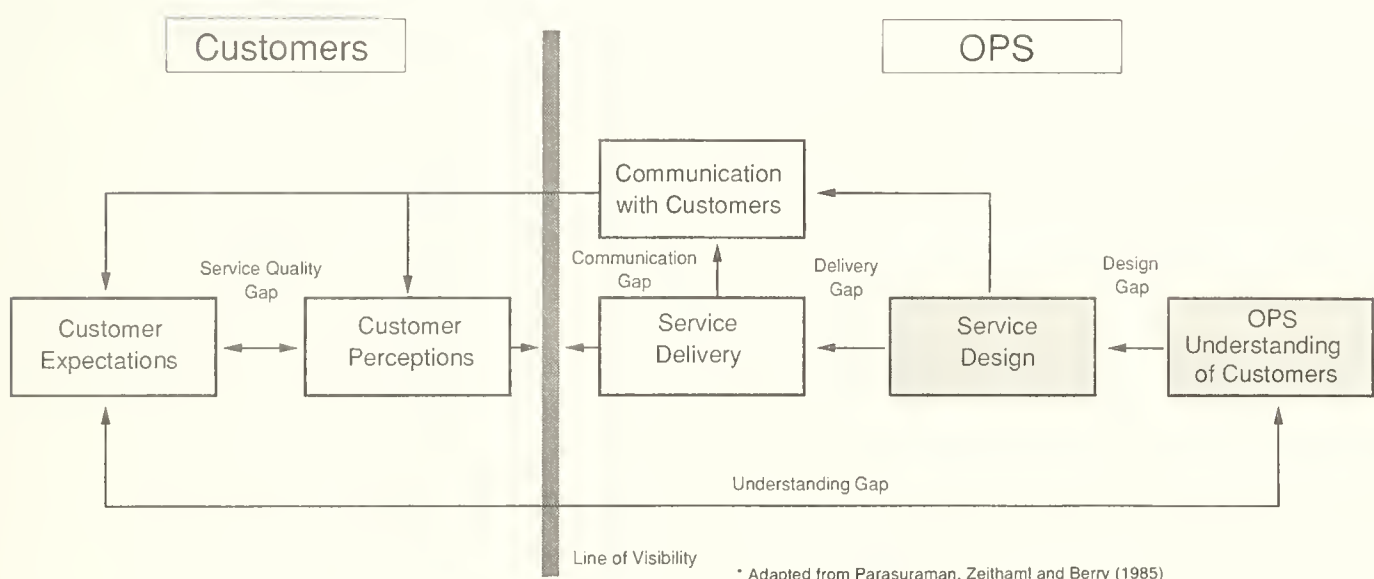
What Is a Service Process?

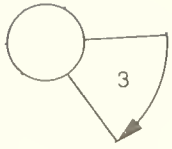
A service process is a systematic series of activities designed to achieve a specific goal or output. At the broadest level, a service or service system can be comprised of many processes.

What Is a Design Gap?

A Design Gap exists when your service system or processes have not been designed to meet customer requirements.

A Service Quality Model





What can cause a Design Gap?

A Design Gap can exist when:

- policies and management systems act as barriers to achieving service quality;
- resources are not deployed in a way that leads to service quality;
- service processes need to be redesigned.

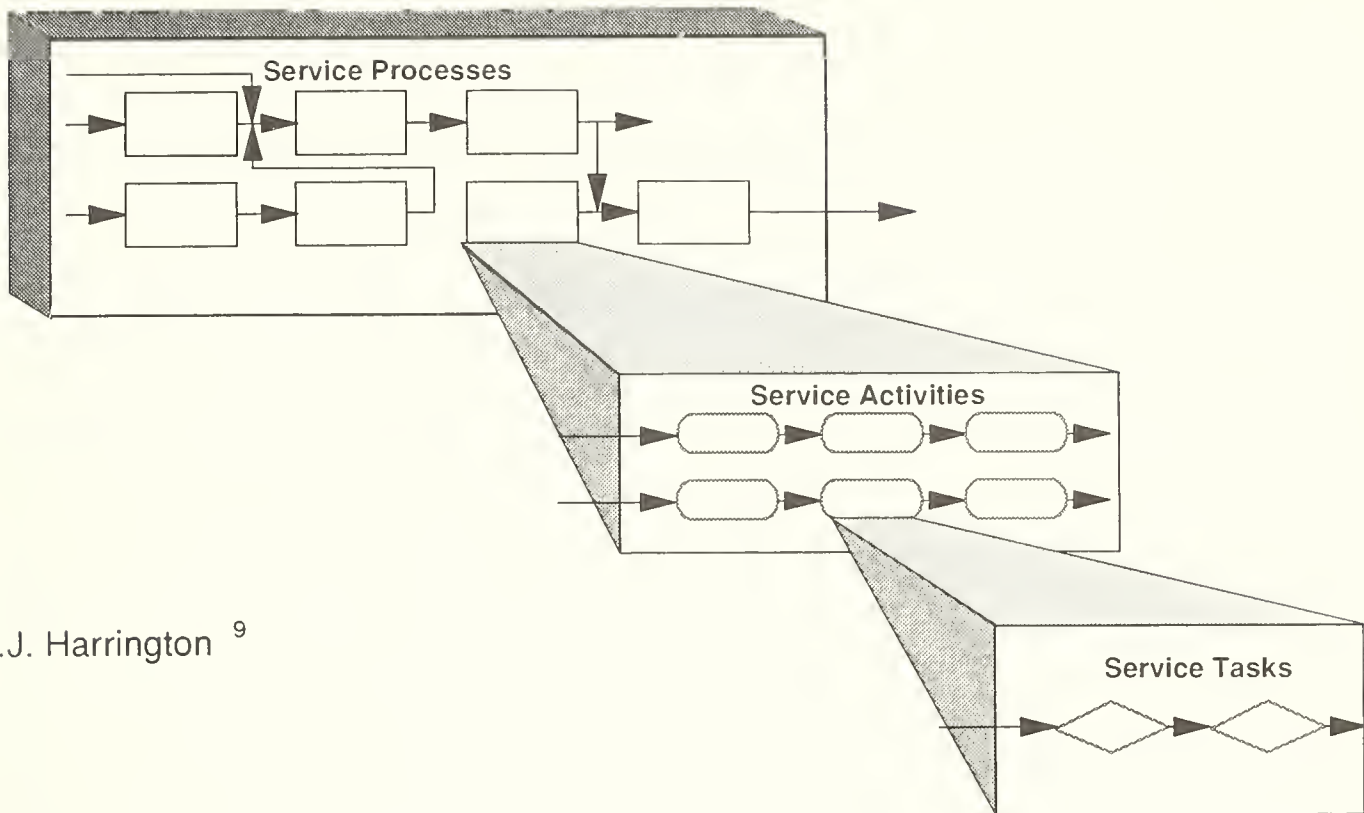
This workbook focuses on the design of service processes.

The Design of a Service Process

The design of a service process is critical to service quality. Key questions to ask are:

- Is the present process capable of meeting customer requirements?
- Should you create a new design or improve the existing one?

You can only answer these questions by quantifying the present process and its output and determining how much the output varies from what customers require. This activity may lead you to conclude that the service process, as it is now, will never be able to meet your customers' needs. On the other hand, you may discover that redesigning the process will produce the results your customers want.

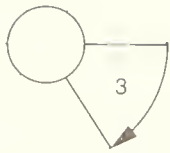


H.J. Harrington ⁹

Peeling the onion

Understanding the design of your service system is a bit like peeling an onion. You need to analyze each of the onion's major layers, a layer at a time.

Layer One	The first layer is comprised of service processes. In very complex processes, it is useful to identify subprocesses.
Layer Two	The second layer is comprised of activities or major actions required to produce a specific result. Activities are composed of tasks.
Layer Three	The third layer is comprised of tasks or individual operations or pieces of work.



The "official" service process and what really happens

When you start to peel the onion or analyze a service to improve, you need to distinguish between the way the service is supposed to be delivered and the way it really operates.

Employees may find themselves having to "bend the rules" in order to make policies and procedures practical. The objective here is to understand the current process as it really works and then find out what you need to develop a practical and effective process. As you analyze a service process, always describe "what really happens".

3.2 Listing Your Major Service Processes

Every service consists of a number of major processes. Each major process has a process owner who has control over the process and is responsible for its output. In a complex service it may be necessary to select a single process for initial focus. This process should represent the best opportunity for improvement. An Opportunity Matrix can be used to help select the best process to examine.

Working with the Fictional Improvement Team

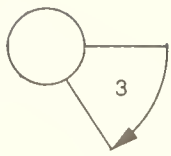
The Fictional Improvement Team looked at the major processes of its registration service and listed them in **Activity Sheet 8** on the next page. The team also identified the process owner for each process.

Activity Sheet 8 - List your major service processes and process owners.	
Major Service Processes	Process Owners
Register individual members of the general public.	Manager A
Register service providers, companies, industries, products and services.	Manager A
Hear claims and make decisions.	Manager B
Receive payment and inquiries.	Manager C
Conduct inspections and investigations.	Manager D
Initiate legal action.	Manager E

What about you?

Using **Worksheet 8**, page 141, list your major service processes. If you list more than five or six major processes, you have probably listed activities, the next layer.

For each process, identify the process owner.



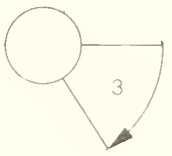
3.3 Describing the Key Activities

Every process consists of a number of key activities or major steps. To list the key activities for a specific process, you need to define the beginning and end of the process and mentally walk through it. Then arrange the activities in order. Limit the number of activities to ten. Continue to refine it until the entire team agrees that this accurately represents the process from beginning to end.

Working with the Fictional Improvement Team

The Fictional Improvement team looked at the process of registering individual members of the general public. In **Activity Sheet 9** below, the team listed the key activities in order and the activity owner.

Activity Sheet 9 - List your key activities.		
Major Process Registering individual members of general public		
Key Activities	Order	Activity Owner
Reception.	1	Receptionist
Determine if customer is eligible.	2	Registration clerk
Input data.	3	Registration clerk
Assign registration number.	4	Central Data Base
Produce temporary document.	5	Registration clerk
Issue temporary document to customer.	6	Document clerk



What about you?

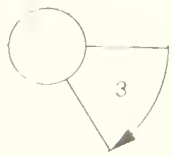
Using **Worksheet 9**, page 142, list the activities in one of your service processes. For each activity, identify the activity owner.

3.4 Describing the Tasks

Tasks are the smallest parts of a service process. Each key activity has a number of tasks. Each task will have a task owner who is responsible for the task.

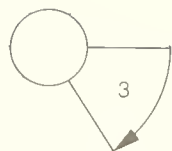
Working with The Fictional Improvement Team

The Fictional Improvement Team used **Activity Sheets 10a to 10f** on the following pages to describe the tasks for each of the key activities in the Registration Process.



Activity Sheet 10a - List your key tasks.		
Major Process Registering individual members of general public		
Key Activity 1 Reception		
Key Tasks	Order	Task Owner
Greet customer.	1	Receptionist
Take a number and wait for the number to be called.	2	Customer
Hand in required documents and completed application.	3	Customer

Activity Sheet 10b - List your key tasks.		
Major Process Registering individual members of general public		
Key Activity 2 Determine if customer is eligible to register.		
Key Tasks	Order	Task Owner
Greet customer.	1	Registration clerk
Check to see if application form is complete and consistent.	2	Registration clerk
Validate proof (proof of Ontario residence, Canadian citizenship status, land title, ownership, etc.).	3	Registration clerk
Determine if customer is eligible to register (meets or does not meet the criteria).	4	Registration clerk
If customer meets criteria, continue. If customer does not meet criteria, make a referral, if appropriate, and stop.	5	Registration clerk



Activity Sheet 10c - List your key tasks.		
Major Process Registering individual members of general public		
Key Activity 3 Input data.		
Key Tasks	Order	Task Owner
Write data on Form 1 (for microfilming of original application).	1	Registration clerk
Write data on Form 2 (back-up for computer input).	2	Registration clerk
Input data to central data base.	3	Registration clerk

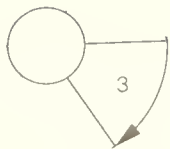
Activity Sheet 10d - List your key tasks.		
Major Process Registering individual members of general public		
Key Activity 4 Assign registration number.		
Key Tasks	Order	Task Owner
Add name to data base and assign registration number.	1	Central data base
Write registration number on the application.	2	Registration clerk

Activity Sheet 10e - List your key tasks.		
Major Process Registering individual members of general public		
Key Activity 5 Produce temporary document.		
Key Tasks	Order	Task Owner
Request system to produce the temporary registration document.	1	Registration clerk
Produce temporary registration document.	2	Central data base

Activity Sheet 10f - List your key tasks.		
Major Process Registering individual members of general public		
Key Activity 6 Issue temporary document to the customer.		
Tasks	Order	Task Owner
Match document to proof of identity.	1	Document clerk
Issue temporary document to customer.	2	Document clerk

What about you?

Using **Worksheets 10a to 10f**, pages 143 - 148, list the tasks in one of your major activities. For each task, indicate the task owner.



3.5 Creating a Process Path

A process path describes, in graphic form, the service processes, activities and tasks in logical order and the owners of each. The first level of a process path describes the key activities of the service process and the activity owners. The second level describes the tasks or decisions associated with each activity and the task owners.

Working with the Fictional Improvement Team

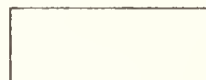
The Fictional Improvement Team used the following instructions to create the first level of its process path. See **Activity Sheet 11a** on the next page.

Level One This level shows the input, activities and output of the service process.

1. Describe the input. An input triggers the service process. Often an input comes from the customer. Show input as an oblong.



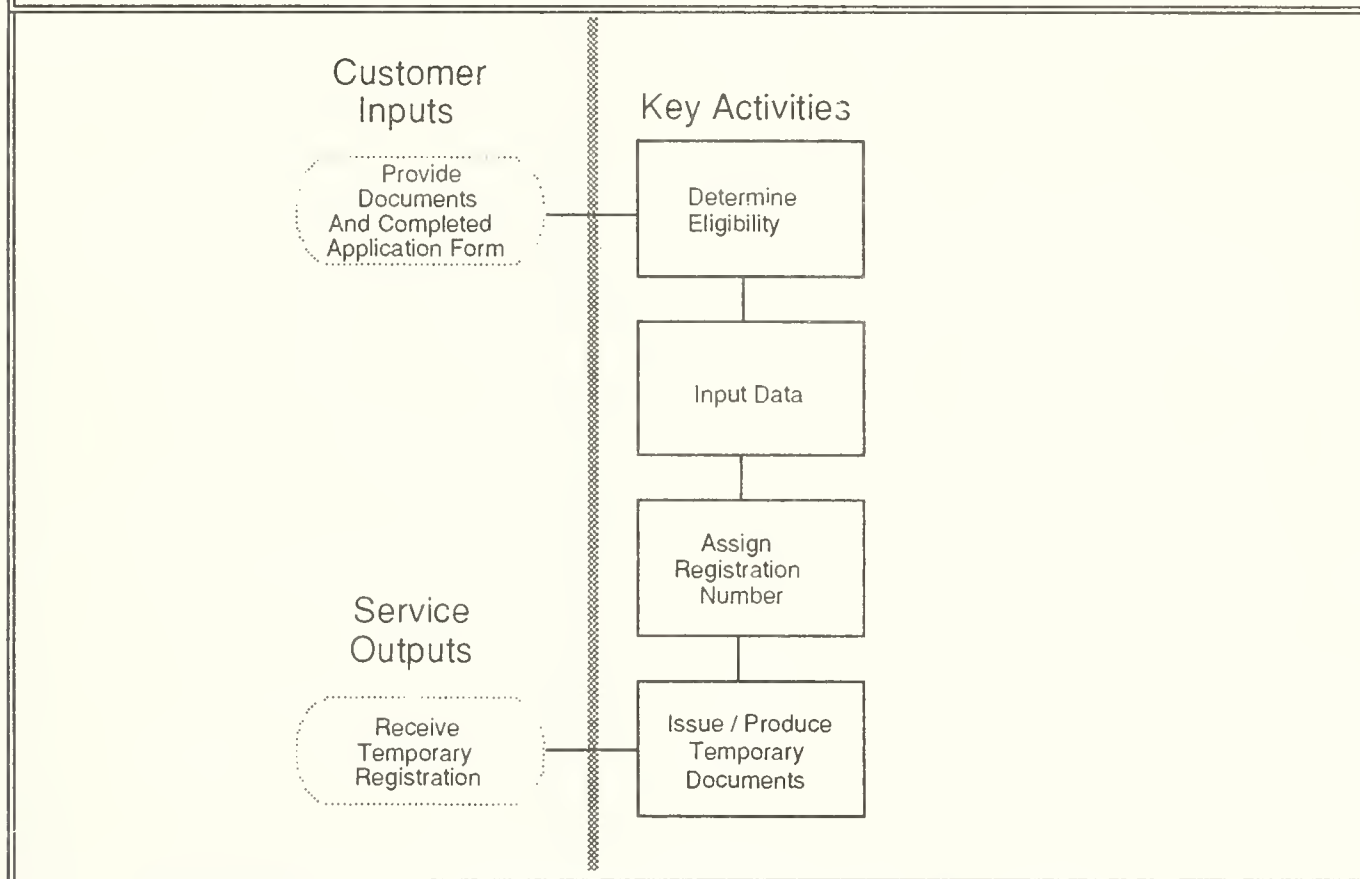
2. Describe the key activities. Key activities are the actions required to produce a desired result. Show key activities as large rectangles. Arrange key activities in a logical order.



3. Describe the output. An output is the product or result of the key activities. An output is produced for internal and external customers. Show output as an oblong.



Activity Sheet 11a - Create an activity level process path



Then the team used the following instructions to create the second level of its process path. See **Activity Sheet 11b** on the next page.

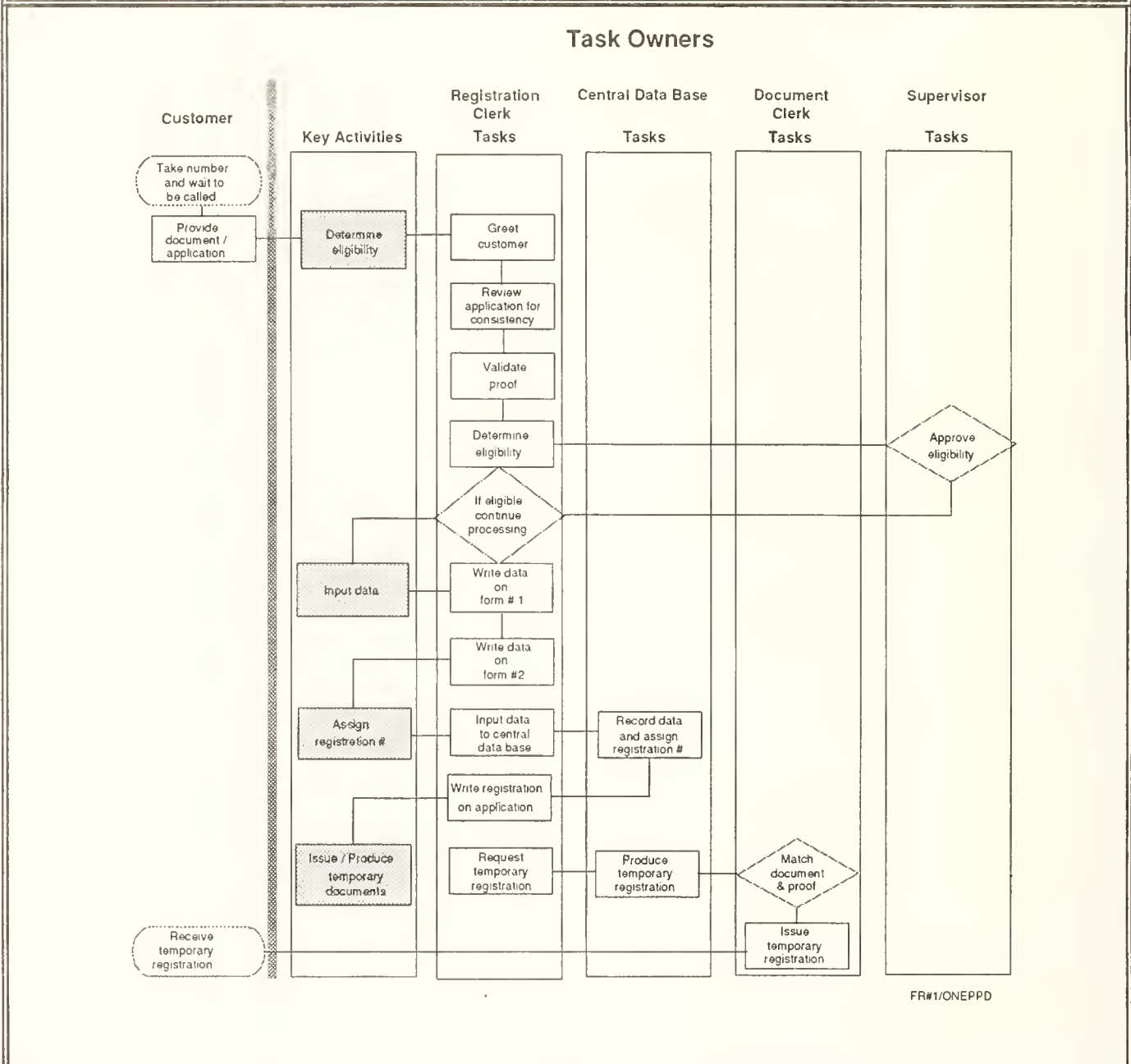
Level Two This more detailed process path provides a map for the team to begin its analysis. It also provides a checksheet for data collection. The description of the process will evolve as the team collects data.

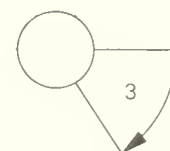
1. Describe the tasks associated with each activity. The tasks are the individual operations or pieces of work to be performed. Show tasks as smaller rectangles.

When the task involves a decision, show the decision as a diamond.

2. Create a column for each task owner/service provider. Place the task under the appropriate column. Double check to ensure each task owner has been involved in the development of the process path. Ideally, a representative of each task should be on your Improvement Team.

Activity Sheet 11b - Create a task level process path.





Identifying units of measurements for your process path

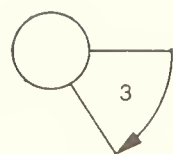
As the Fictional Improvement Team collected data to create its process path describing a service process, it used units of measurement that best describe customer requirements.

For example, the unit's customers required timeliness, so the team collected time data by the minute, hour, day, etc. The team began with **gross** measures and refined them over time.

Calculating the processing time and cycle time

The time required to complete the service from the initial request is called the **cycle time**. The amount of time taken in each activity and task in the process is called **processing time**.

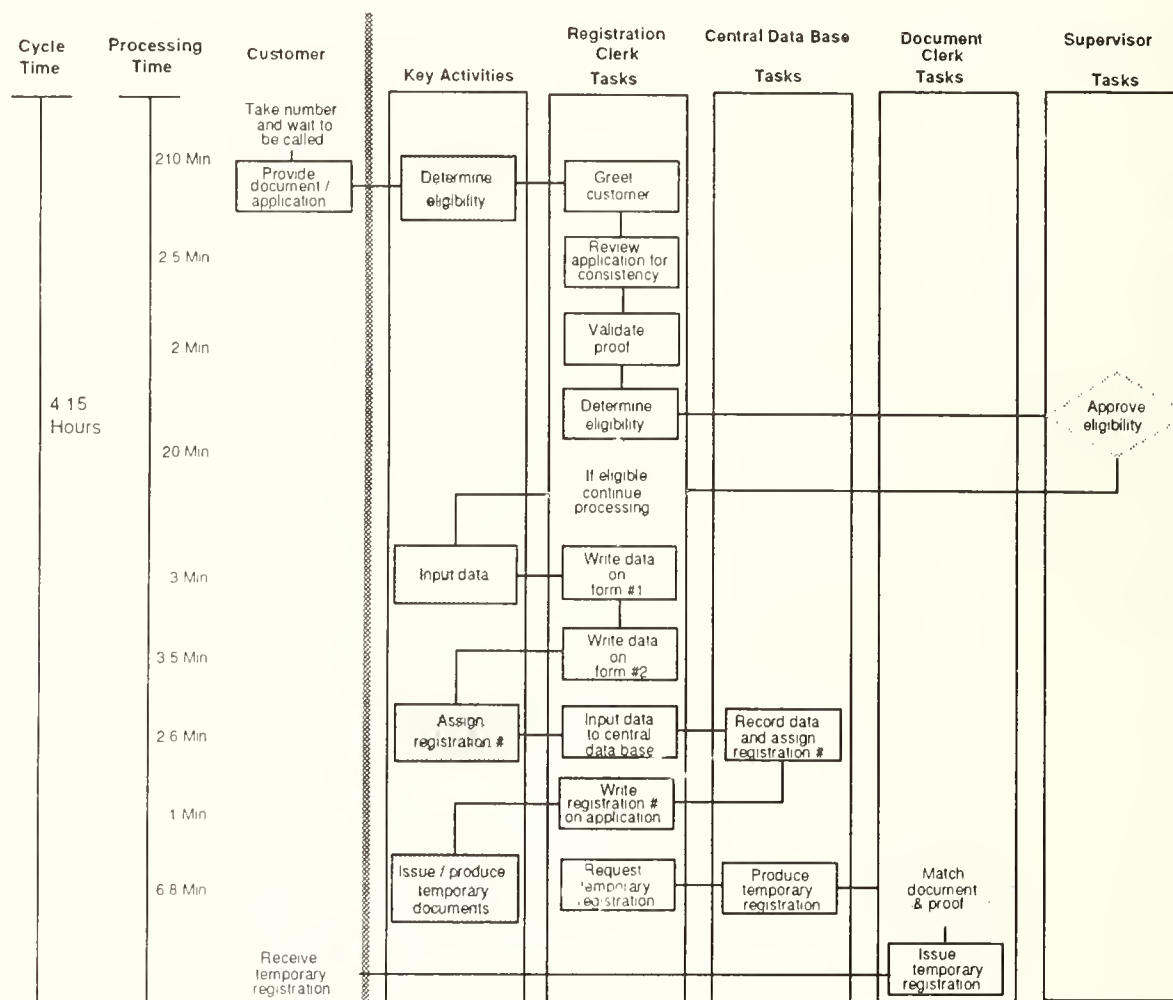
The Fictional Improvement Team calculated the average processing time shown for each task and indicated it on the process path below. The team could then calculate the cycle time or total processing time of 4.15 hours. (See **Activity Sheet 11c**.)

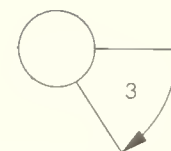


Activity Sheet 11c - Calculate the average processing time and cycle time.

A Task Level Process Path

Task Owners





Identifying the Most Frequent and Highest Cost Activities and Tasks

You should analyze those activities and tasks with the highest total effect. You can determine cost by calculating the fixed and variable costs associated with each activity or task and the average pay for each position involved.

In more complex processes, with a greater number of decision points, some activities and tasks will occur much more frequently than others. Even if a specific activity or task takes more time and is therefore more costly on an individual basis, other less costly tasks may occur more often. Therefore, it is essential to identify the frequency of each activity and task and its total cost in the process.

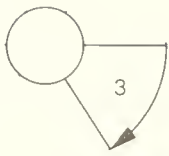
Working with the Fictional Improvement Team

In **Activity Sheet 11c**, page 58, the average waiting time for supervisory approval is 20 minutes. This occurs an average of 35 times a day per supervisor. It takes each of six supervisors an average of five minutes to approve a decision. Assuming each supervisory hour costs \$32, each approval costs about \$2.70. The total cost of approval for all supervisors equals approximately \$570 per day. The total accumulated waiting time before supervisory approval is approximately 53 hours per day.

If the unit established approval criteria and trained the staff to use the criteria, then the unit could eliminate this step and reduce waiting time. The savings in supervisory time could then be redeployed to improve service quality.

What about you?

Use **Worksheets 11a, 11b and 11c** in the **Worksheets Section** to create your process path. Using **Worksheet 11a**, page 149, create the first level of your process path. Using **Worksheet 11b**, page 150, create the second level of your process path. Using **Worksheet 11c**, page 151, calculate the average processing time for each task and then the cycle time.



Knowing Your Current Standards of Service

Creating a process path with accurate units of measurement will enable you to know your current standards of service clearly. Collecting data before you begin to introduce improvements will give you a baseline for assessing how well your service processes meet customer requirements.

As you begin to collect data:

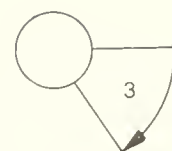
- collect the easiest data first such as timeliness, reliability and cost;
- check to see if any of the data is already available;
- collect only enough information to give you a clear picture of your current standards of service.

Collecting too much information can lead to "analysis paralysis". Keep in mind the KISS principle: Keep It Simple, Smart!

3.6 Setting Target Standards of Service

To close the gap between your current standard of service and your customers' requirements, set a target standard. The goal is to improve your service process continuously until the service consistently meets the target standard. Then you should raise the target standard until it meets customer requirements.

When you have a gap between your customers' requirements and your current standards of service, the target standard should represent a significant stretch for the service. The target standard should be at least a 50% improvement over the current standard.



Setting Higher Targets for Standards of Service

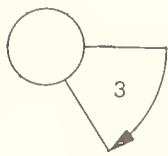
Each OPS service unit needs to determine its customers' requirements and set realistic but progressively higher targets for standards of service. Reaching this new standard of service may require you to think about the way you currently deliver your service. Ultimately, each service unit should set realistic target service standards that bring the service closer and closer to meeting the customer's requirements. It is essential to involve employees in setting target standards.

Working with the Fictional Improvement Team

For each service quality basic, the Fictional Improvement Team used **Activity Sheet 12**, on the next page, to summarize:

- customer requirements;
- units of measurement to describe customer requirements;
- current standards of service;
- target standards of service.

For each service quality basic, the target standard of service represents a 50% improvement.

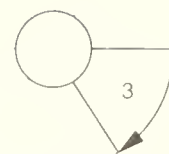


Activity Sheet 12 - Summarize the service requirements and standards of your customers.

Service Process

Registration of a temporary document

Service Quality Basics	Measures (unit of measurement)	Customer Requirements	Current Service Standard	Target Service Standard
How fast?	Minutes, days, weeks	30 minutes for a temporary document	3 hours	2 hours
How reliable?	Per cent (%) correct	100% correct	94% correct	97% correct
How responsive?	Flexibility Choice of service options Individual attention	High level of satisfaction Get what they want quickly by mail, phone or in-person Flexibility in response to individual circumstances	fair	good
How accessible?	Number of contacts Closeness (local/central) Hours of operation Languages spoken	One contact Local access Hours: 8:00 - 6:00, open one evening per week English and French	4 to 5 contacts Local access Hours: 8:30 - 4:30, no evenings English and French	2 to 3 contacts Hours: 8:00 - 6:00, no evenings
How much?	Cost per transaction including user fee cost of delivery	No direct charge Free telephone access	Cost of delivery \$35	Cost of delivery \$18



What about you?

Using **Worksheet 12**, page 152, summarize the service requirements and standards of your customers for the service process you selected.

The Value of Benchmarking

Once you have determined your customers' requirements and your target standards of service, it may be useful to know how other service providers are delivering their services.

- ▶ Is anyone meeting the customers' requirements under operating conditions similar to yours?
- ▶ What methods are they using?
- ▶ What can you learn from them?

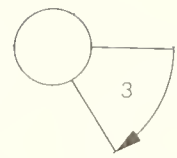
When looking at other service providers, do not restrict yourself to just those who are in the same service business. Think generically. Who else provides a service that is similar, but not necessarily the same? For example, who is the best at registering people, providing information, or providing financial assistance?

What is benchmarking?

Benchmarking is a systematic process of:

- identifying every aspect of your organization's activities;
- setting priorities;
- studying outside organizations to identify the best performers in each area;
- establishing goals or benchmarks.

It does not matter whether the other service providers are from the public or private sector. The goal is to learn what is possible and identify the best outside practices to adapt to your organization. While benchmarking can be very useful, it should not delay the analysis of your service process.



Xerox Canada's approach to improve the quality of work

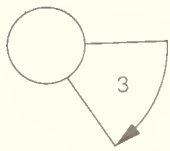
Xerox Canada has used benchmarking to help discover methods which can improve the quality of work output. The company used specific principles to complement internal operations and create new ideas.

- ▶ Successful benchmarking depends on a commitment from management.
- ▶ Successful benchmarking depends on how well you know and understand how your own work is accomplished.
- ▶ Successful implementation of the benchmarking process and results depends on a willingness to change and to adapt.
- ▶ It is essential to look for leading outside organizations (public and private) recognized as leaders in your area of interest.
- ▶ Organizations are usually quite willing to share. However, you should not ask your benchmark partner for information that you will not share about your own operations.
- ▶ The focus during benchmarking should be on the enabling practices as well as the performance measurements.
- ▶ Expectations are constantly evolving and customers will continue to require and demand more.

The ten steps of the Xerox benchmarking program

1. **Identify what you will benchmark.** You can benchmark any process. However, it is best to benchmark key processes representing a high percentage of your organization's total costs or time.
2. **Identify comparative organizations.** Choose the "best-in-class", superior performers from which you can learn the most. The organizations do not have to be in the same business or industry as your organization.

3. **Determine the data to collect.** Get information to help you understand business processes and practices used to get specific results such as levels of customer satisfaction, quality or service, costs, overhead, etc. Analyze existing published information, interview industry observers and visit comparative companies.
4. **Determine the current performance gap.** Measure your own performance gap and compare it to your benchmark partner. This will point to opportunities for improvement.
5. **Project future performance levels.** Look at trend data to determine whether the gap between your organization's performance and that of your benchmark partner is likely to close or continue to widen.
6. **Communicate benchmark findings and gain acceptance.** Convince senior management that the benchmark findings are sound and based on solid analysis. Communicate the results of your benchmarking to the parts of your organization that must support the practices you want to improve.
7. **Establish functional goals.** Translate the findings of the benchmarking analysis into a new set of operating goals, principles and standards. This exercise will help you to determine new, externally-based performance targets.
8. **Develop action plans.** Develop action plans to improve your performance. These may include working harder to strengthen identified weaknesses, trying to equal the competition or attempting to introduce superior practices.
9. **Implement specific actions and monitor progress.** The action plans must include specific milestones and must identify staff accountable for the milestones. Measuring results and communicating them will enable staff carrying out the action program to adjust their activities.
10. **Recalibrate benchmarks.** Recheck benchmark performance targets periodically. Organizations often forget that while they are improving their own operations, the competition and the best-in-class performers are improving their operations as well.



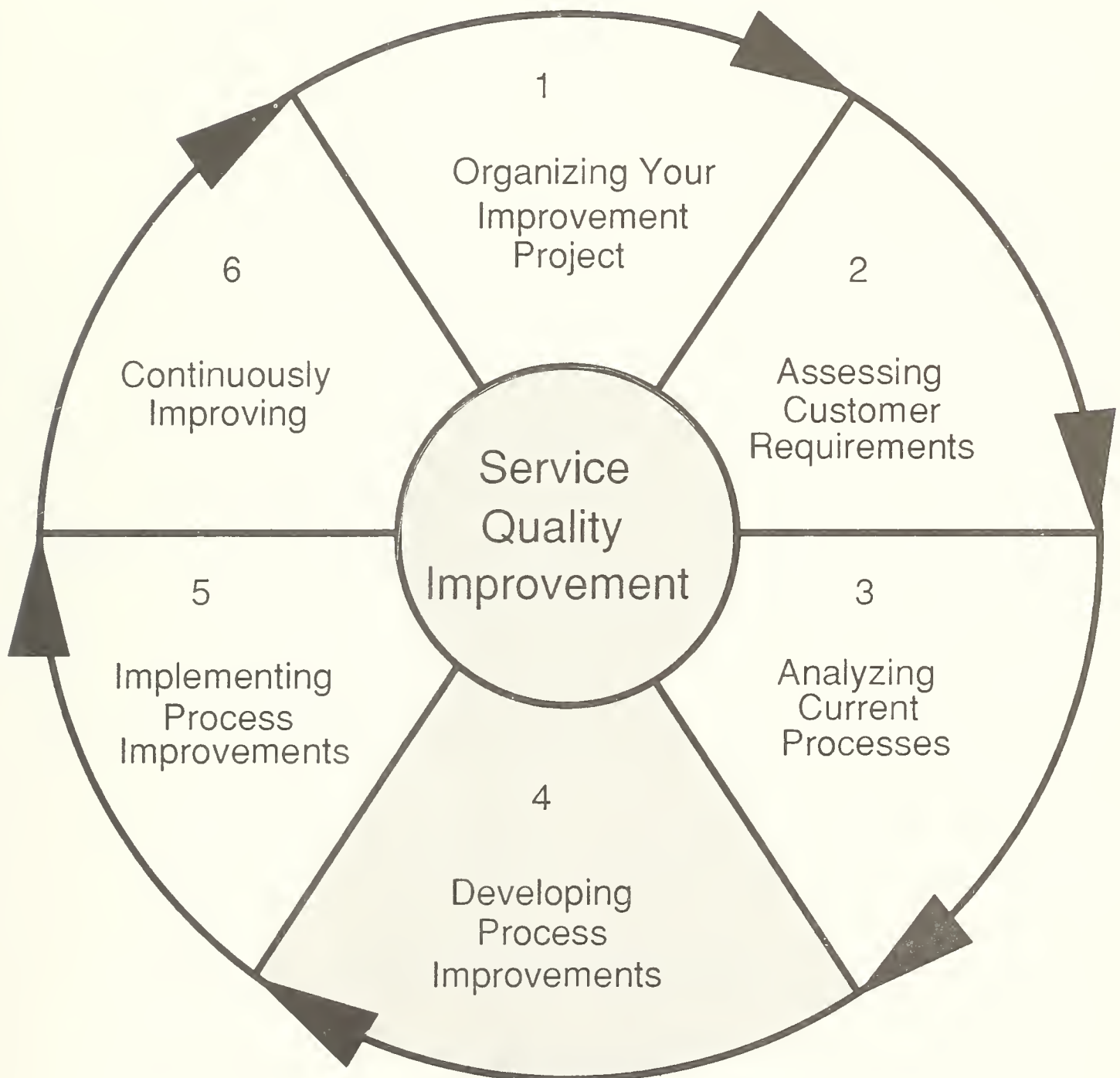
Summary

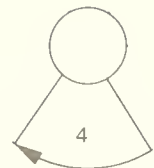
In Chapter Three, we have described how to:

- 3.1 analyze the design of your service processes;
- 3.2 list your major service processes;
- 3.3 describe the key activities;
- 3.4 describe the tasks;
- 3.5 create a process path;
- 3.6 set target standards of service.

Output A description of your current standards of service and your target standards of service based on customer requirements.

Developing Process Improvements





CHAPTER FOUR

Developing Process Improvements

To begin Chapter Four, you need:

Input a description of your present standards of service and your target service standards, based on customer requirements.

In this chapter, you will learn how to:

Process

- 4.1 identify and select key problems with service quality;
- 4.2 identify the contributing factors;
- 4.3 analyze the contributing factors;
- 4.4 identify the most important factors within or not within your policies and budgets;
- 4.5 identify design, delivery, and communications issues;
- 4.6 restate critical and controllable factors as improvement objectives;
- 4.7 develop action plans for controllable objectives;
- 4.8 conduct a pilot project to test the improvements;
- 4.9 develop improvement proposals.

By the end of Chapter Four, you will be able to:

Output develop an action plan to improve factors within your service's policies and budgets;

develop improvement proposals for factors beyond your services policies and budgets.

4.1 Identifying and Selecting Key Problems with Service Quality

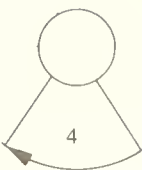
Having created a process path and set target standards for each part of the service process you need to ask yourself:

- ▶ Which of the service quality basics is the customer's greatest concern?
- ▶ Is it timeliness, reliability, responsiveness, accessibility or cost?

Which of these Service Quality Gaps should you address first? One way to select a starting point is to rank each quality problem as either high, medium or low on the basis of:

- how often the problem occurs;
- how it effects all customers;
- how long the problem lasts when it occurs.

Frequency	How often does this problem occur? Does it occur hourly, daily, weekly, monthly?
Effect	What is the effect of this problem? How does this affect service to customers? What is the effect on employees? cost? What is the number of other services or functions affected? What is the extent of error and rework?
Duration	How long does the problem usually last each time?



Working with the Fictional Improvement Team

The Fictional Improvement Team used **Activity Sheet 13** below to select its first service quality problem. First, it ranked each service quality problem according to frequency, effect and duration.

The team determined that timeliness, reliability and accessibility were the highest priorities for customers. While reliability was a concern for every customer, relatively fewer problems with reliability occurred and it affected only the individuals concerned. Although the team would address reliability at some future date, it felt that addressing timeliness and accessibility first would have bigger pay-offs for more customers.

Activity Sheet 13 - Select your first service quality problem.			
Service Quality Problem	Frequency	Effect	Duration
Long delays (timeliness)	high	high	high
Inaccurate or incomplete information (reliability)	low	low	low
Customer can't reach unit by telephone (accessibility)	high	high	high

Selecting the highest priority problem and writing a problem statement

Having selected timeliness as the problem with the highest priority, the team used **Activity Sheet 14** to write a statement describing the problem.

Activity Sheet 14 - Write a problem statement.	
Long Delays	It takes over 4 hours to obtain a temporary document

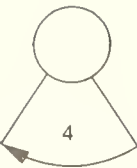
Using 50% improvement as a guideline for setting its first target standard, the Fictional Improvement Team decided its first objective should be to reduce the time required to issue a temporary document by two hours.

As soon as it reached the two-hour target, the team would revise the target standard to one hour. Then it would reduce the time to 30 minutes to meet customers requirements.

Evaluating the expected benefits of solving this problem

The team concluded that if it could speed up the time required, customers would be much more satisfied. The team's research of customer requirements found that while customers preferred 30 minutes, they would find two hours more acceptable. (It was certainly better than four hours!)

The team then did a cost-benefit analysis, using **Activity Sheet 15** on the next page. It concluded that efforts to improve timeliness were clearly justified.

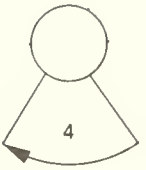


Activity Sheet 15 - Do a cost-benefit analysis.		
Options	Cost	Benefits
Continue doing it the same way.	high cost of inquiries about late documents: \$45 per inquiry high rates of customer dissatisfaction staff burnout with high workload and frustration with the system	no further effort required because of high workloads
Stop doing it.	mandatory function	eliminate workload
Improve it.	minimal costs until you incur capital costs associated with central data base	reduce number of inquiries and save about \$45 per inquiry improve customer satisfaction improve employee morale

What about you?

Using **Worksheet 13**, page 153, rate your service quality problems on the basis of frequency, effect and duration. Then, select the problem with the highest priority and write a statement describing it on **Worksheet 14**, page 154.

Using **Worksheet 15**, page 155, do a cost-benefit analysis to evaluate the cost and benefits of solving the problem.



4.2 Identifying the Contributing Factors

Having collected the data for your service process, you can now analyze it systematically. Experience has shown that a systematic approach to analyzing a problem is essential. If you leap to conclusions and solve a problem before properly analyzing it, you may end up solving the wrong problem or trying to solve matters which are beyond your operational control.

It will be important to separate those factors within your operational control from those factors beyond your control.

Determining Process Capability and Variation

Your team must determine whether the service process is capable of producing the desired results. Juran¹⁰ defines process capability as:

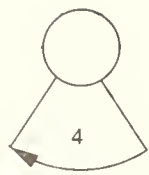
- the inherent ability of a process to reproduce its results consistently during multiple cycles of operation;
- the results a process could achieve if you removed the significant causes of poor performance.

Two sources of variation

Two sources of variation exist in a process: common and special.

Common variation is variation associated with the system, that is, common to all processes and employees. Common variation may be:

- a lack of constructive feedback on performance;
- a lack of proper training;
- inadequate equipment;
- poor working conditions;
- poorly designed policies and processes.



Deming¹¹ has identified eleven causes of common variation — all within management's responsibility.

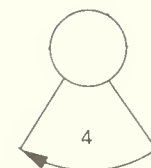
- ▶ 1. Poor design of product (or service)
- ▶ 2. Poor instruction and poor supervision
- ▶ 3. Failure to measure the effects of common causes and to reduce them
- ▶ 4. Failure to give employees information that shows where they could improve their performance and the uniformity of the product (or service)
- ▶ 5. Incoming materials not suited to the requirements
- ▶ 6. Procedures not suited to the requirements
- ▶ 7. Machines out of order
- ▶ 8. Machines not suited to the requirements
- ▶ 9. Poor light
- ▶ 10. Uncomfortable working conditions
- ▶ 11. Shift of management's emphasis from quantity to quality, back and forth without understanding how to achieve quality

Management, with employee input, must deal with system problems.

Special variation is variation associated with a specific cause, that is, specific to certain processes such as:

- a word processor that does not work;
- an employee who does not want to work as a member of a team;
- employees who are not courteous to customers.

Special variations must be corrected by those directly involved in the operation.



Some researchers estimate that special variations cause 15 percent of the problems in a process, while common variations cause the remaining 85 percent.

Gitlow and Gitlow¹²

Categories or Common Types of Contributing Factors

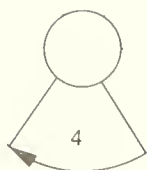
Many types or categories of factors can contribute to service quality problems.

Category	Example of contributing factor
People	training, recruitment, selection
Methods	the ways of doing business
Equipment / Tools	computers, machines
Measurement	the basis or standard for comparison
Materials	elements used in the service process such as type of paper
Environment	working conditions such as heating, lighting, noise
Customer	unique characteristics of customers such as language
Communication	mutual exchange of information to improve understanding of process requirements and determine customers' expectations of service levels

Categorizing each contributing factor according to the above types will help you to analyze the contributing factors systematically.

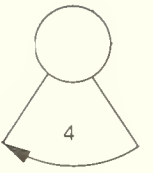
Working with the Fictional Improvement Team

The Fictional Improvement team used the left column of **Activity Sheet 16**, on the next page, to brainstorm all possible contributing factors to its problem. The team stated contributing factors as negatives. Then it used the right column to group the contributing factors by categories or type of factor.



Activity Sheet 16 - List and categorize the contributing factors to your problem.

Possible Contributing Factors	Type of Factor
lack of proper staff training	people
lack of measurement of process performance	measurement
high volume of office visits	customer
change in legislation	policy
lack of staff	budget
lack of customer knowledge about required documents	communication
misinterpretation of questions on form by customers	method
complex form - difficult to complete	method
data copied too many times	method
poor screen design	method
staff not redeployed to peak periods	people
lack of extended hours	method
poor communication with customers about required forms	communication
lack of phone access for customers to get information before office visit	equipment
lack of pre-screening before line-up -- proper documents not identified until after customer has waited in line	method
downtime - lack of computer support	equipment
high volume that strained capacity	equipment
wait time to get approvals from supervisors	method



What about you?

Using **Worksheet 16**, page 156, list all possible contributing factors to your problem. State the contributing factors as negatives. Then group the contributing factors by categories.

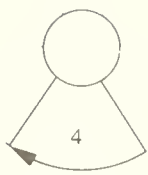
4.3 Analyzing the Contributing Factors

Gathering Data

Be sure your team has data to validate what it thinks about the major causes of your service quality problem. It helps to develop a checksheet to measure how often and for how long each contributing factor occurs. While your improvement team is observing the problem, other factors will likely surface. Be sure to revise your team checksheets to include these factors.

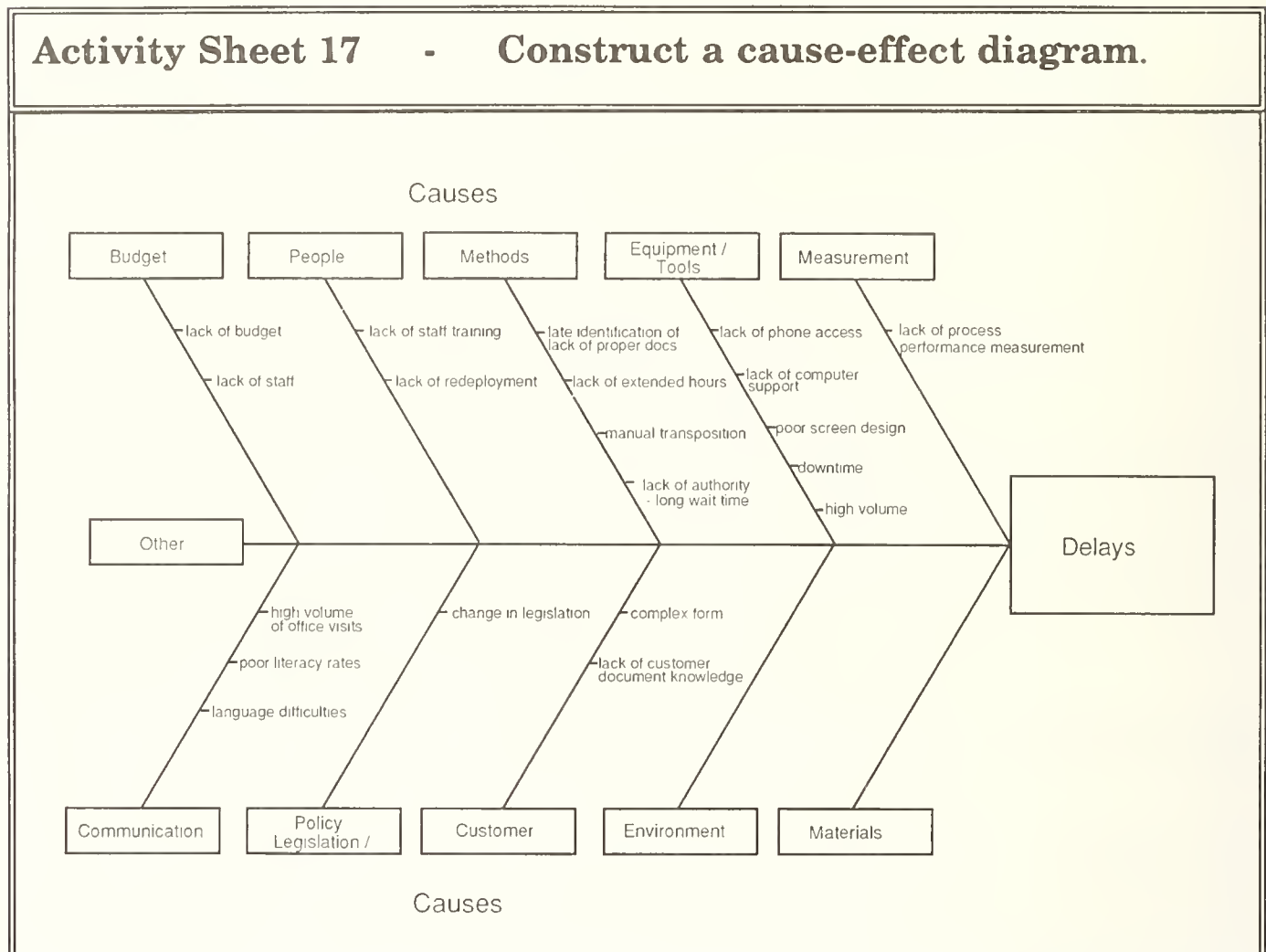
Constructing a Cause-Effect Diagram

A cause-effect analysis is a method for identifying and categorizing the factors contributing to a problem. It is sometimes called a fishbone diagram because of its shape. The cause-effect diagram provides a simple but comprehensive way to understand complex problems. For each factor, you need to ask, "Why does this problem occur?" until you have identified the underlying cause. One way to get at the root cause is to ask, "Why does this problem occur?" again and again. The objective is to identify the root-causes of quality problems and then find ways to eliminate them.



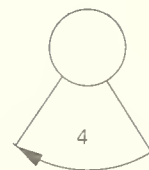
Working with the Fictional Improvement Team

The Fictional Improvement Team constructed the cause-effect diagram in **Activity Sheet 17** below. They wrote their problem (delays) in the box on the right. Then, they labelled each of the main categories and listed each contributing factor under the appropriate category.



What about you?

Use **Worksheet 17**, page 157, to construct a cause-effect diagram. Write the problem in the box at the right. Then list each of the contributing factors under the appropriate category.



4.4 Identifying the Most Important Factors Within or Not Within Your Policies and Budgets

Assessing the Importance of Each Factor

To separate the "vital few" causes of a problem from the "trivial many" possibilities, assess the importance of each factor. In assessing a factor's importance, you should consider how often it occurs, how it affects the problem and how long it usually lasts. Overall, determine if the factor is high, medium or low in terms of its importance. Always confirm what you have assessed with data.

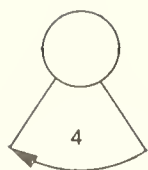
Using a Pareto Analysis

One tool for analyzing the importance of factors is a Pareto Analysis. This tool shows how often a contributing factor occurs. It is based on the premise that the majority of problems are usually caused by a few of the contributing factors. Since you can realistically deal with only a few factors at a time, you should concentrate your efforts in areas having the greatest effect on improving service.

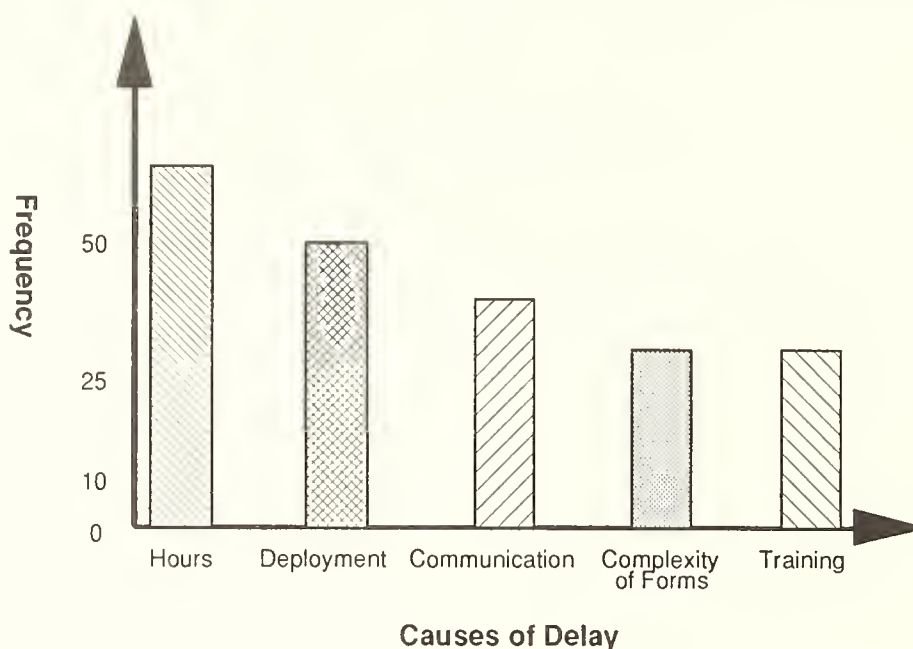
Working with the Fictional Improvement Team

The Fictional Improvement Team used **Activity Sheet 18**, on the next page, to construct a Pareto diagram. The team identified the categories of possible causes of the problem such as downtime, staff not best deployed, poor communication, complexity of forms and lack of training. It used input from staff and direct observation to generate the list of possible causes for their diagram.

Then the team collected data on how often each possible cause occurred and displayed the data in a Pareto diagram. This helped it to separate the "vital few" causes from the "trivial many" possibilities.



Activity Sheet 18 - Construct a Pareto diagram.



What about you?

Construct a Pareto diagram on **Worksheet 18**, page 158. Chart the frequency of the possible causes of your problem.

Identifying Which Factors You Can Control

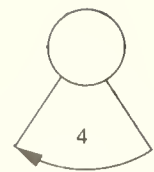
Separating what you can control from what you can't control is a critical step in an improvement project. Identifying critical factors which are within your direct control will enable you to concentrate on issues you can change.

It will also help you to define clearly the authority and scope of the service unit. Those items not within your service unit's direct control will become the recommendations you advance to senior management. Regardless of the level of your management sponsor, you may have contributing factors beyond your control in terms of policy or budget.

Working with the Fictional Improvement Team

The Fictional Improvement Team used **Activity Sheet 19**, below, to identify the contributing factors, assess the importance of each factor and determine how much direct control they had over each one.

Activity Sheet 19 - Sort the contributing factors by degrees of importance and control		
Possible Contributing Factor	Importance	Direct Control
People <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of proper staff training • staff not deployed to peak periods 	high high	high high
Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complex forms, difficult to complete • lack of customer knowledge about required documents 	high high	high high
Customer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • too many office visits • literacy limitations • language difficulties 	high high high	low low low
Methods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improper documents identified only after customer has had to wait in line • lack of extended hours • data copied too many times • lack of authority - wait time for supervisory approvals required 	high high medium medium	high high high high
Measurement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • performance not measured 	high	high
Equipment/Tools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of phone access for customers to get information before office visit • lack of support in computer operations • poor screen design • downtime • high volume of customers that strain capacity 	high medium medium medium medium	low low low low low
Budget <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of budget • lack of staff 	high high	low low
Legislation/Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • change in legislation 	high	low



What about you?

Use **Worksheet 19**, page 159, to identify your contributing factors, assess the importance of each factor and determine how much direct control you have.

4.5 Identifying Design, Delivery and Communications Issues

Assess whether each of the most important factors is primarily a design issue, a delivery issue or a communications issue. Policy, deployment and design issues greatly affect an organization's capacity to deliver services.

Deal with policy, deployment of resources and design issues before delivery issues, as these issues are beyond the control of the individual employee. In some cases, design issues are beyond the control of the service unit or ministry. They may be government-wide or shared with another jurisdiction.

Unless you can solve the problem quickly, it is generally best to deal with the factors in a specific order:

- 1. design-related factors;
- 2. delivery factors;
- 3. communications with customers.

By separating design, delivery and communication issues which are within the direct control of the service unit from those which are not, your service unit knows which issues it can and cannot do something about. Assessing whether issues relate to design, delivery or communications helps to determine where to direct your recommendations and proposals for improvement.

Working with the Fictional Improvement Team

The Fictional Improvement Team used **Activity Sheet 20** below, to assess if the contributing factors were design, delivery or communications issues.

Activity Sheet 20 - Sort contributing factors into design, delivery or communications issues.		
Design	Delivery	Communications with Customers
Customer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complex forms - difficult to complete 		lack of customer knowledge about required documents
People <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff not redeployed to peak periods 	lack of proper training for staff	
Methods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improper documents identified only after customer waited in line • data copied by hand too many times • required wait time for approval of supervisors • lack of extended hours 	lack of support for computer operations	
Equipment/Tools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of phone access for customers to get information before office visit 		
Measurement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • performance not measured 		
Budget <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of budget • lack of staff 		
Legislation / Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • change in legislation 		

We will be dealing with delivery and communication issues in Chapter Five.



What about you?

Use **Worksheet 20**, page 160, to identify if your contributing factors are design, delivery or communications issues.

4.6 Restating Critical and Controllable Factors as Improvement Objectives

The more clearly defined the problem, the easier it will be to state your improvement objectives. Just as the problem needs examples to make it more meaningful, so does the improvement objective. Improvement objectives should be developed for those critical contributing factors **within** your service unit's direct control.

Working with the Fictional Improvement Team

The Fictional Improvement Team used **Activity Sheet 21**, on the next page, to list the contributing factors within its control as improvement objectives.

Activity Sheet 21 - List your improvement objectives.
<p style="text-align: center;">Medium to high importance</p> <p style="text-align: center;">High direct control</p>
<p>Make the best use of people.</p> <p>Provide proper staff training.</p> <p>Redeploy staff to peak periods.</p>
<p>Improve communications.</p> <p>Redesign forms so they are easy to complete.</p> <p>Improve customer knowledge about required documents.</p>
<p>Improve methods.</p> <p>Identify improper documents at the earliest contact with customer so they do not wait in line.</p> <p>Extend hours of operation.</p> <p>Eliminate extra copying of data.</p> <p>Give staff authority—so they do not have to wait for supervisory approvals.</p>
<p>Introduce measurements.</p> <p>Develop measurements of performance.</p>

What about you?

Use **Worksheet 21**, page 161, to list improvement objectives for the critical factors within your unit's control.



When Do You Redesign Your Service Process?

If your team determines your service process would be capable of meeting customer requirements by removing certain obstacles, then you should probably redesign the existing process.

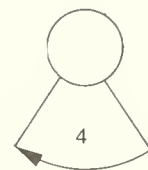
For example, one of the most important service quality basics is timeliness. Juran¹³ has identified a number of ways to reduce cycle time by redesigning a service process.

- ▶ Provide a simplified process to stream the majority of customers.
- ▶ Reduce the number of steps and handoffs.
- ▶ Eliminate wasteful loops or rework.
- ▶ Reduce changeover time.
- ▶ Change from consecutive to concurrent processing.

Providing a simplified process to stream the majority of customers

Do most of your customers have standard needs you can meet with a simplified process? Or do they need a more detailed, customized process? To what extent do the needs of your customers vary? What percentage of customers' needs are standard or routine? Can you stream customers into either a simplified process or a customized process? How early can this happen?

You should simplify your process for standard needs. Automating routine tasks will free employees for matters which require more individual attention. As well, you should customize your process for individual needs. Non-routine tasks will require personalized attention. Developing staff for non-routine tasks can enrich their jobs and make work more satisfying.

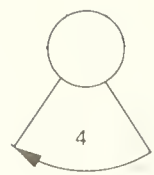


Reducing the number of steps and handoffs

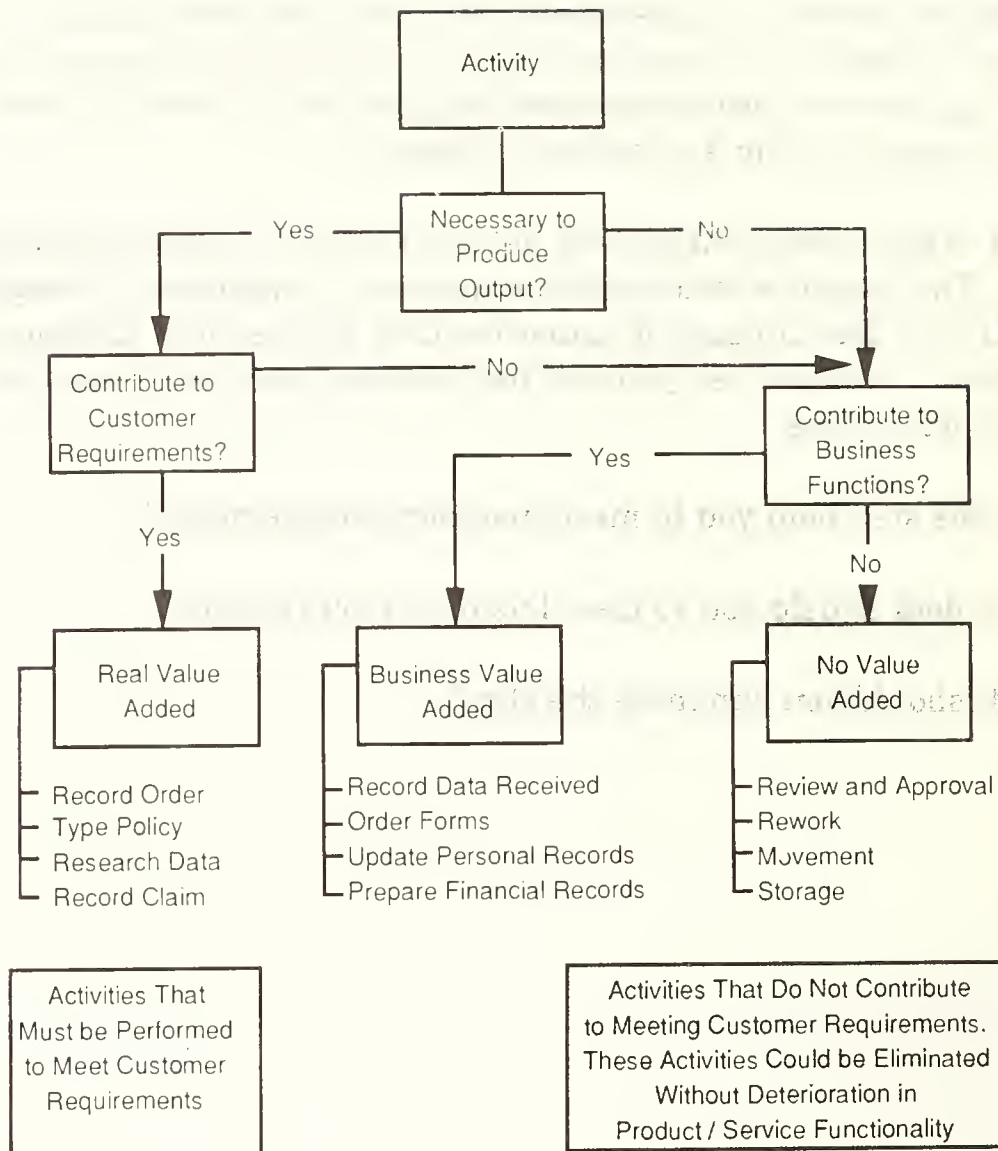
Handoffs are transfers of customers from employee to employee or unit to unit. You should eliminate or combine steps. You should also empower people by delegating more authority and redefining jobs with a broader scope. Set up employee teams within and across functions.

Doing a value-added analysis will help you identify steps to eliminate in your process. The goal of a value-added analysis is to eliminate all steps that have no value. It includes eliminating unneeded data and reports. Harrington¹⁴ recommends that you ask yourself the following questions about each step in your service process.

- ▶ Does the step help you to meet customer requirements?
- ▶ If not, does it help you to meet business requirements?
- ▶ If not, should you eliminate the step?



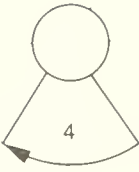
Value-Added Assessment



H.J. Harrington

Eliminating wasteful loops or rework

Rework is when you redo previous work. Rework does not add value, it adds cost. Every time you correct or adjust work you have already done, you have an opportunity to improve your service process. If you eliminate rework, you can save time and money and improve customer satisfaction.



Reducing changeover time

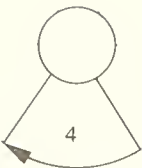
Changeover time is the time required to change from delivering one type of service to another. When volume justifies it, you should dedicate resources to deliver specific services. As well, you should standardize key features of the process.

Changing from consecutive to concurrent processing

Concurrent processing can also save a lot of time. It is not always necessary to process sequentially. Think about having employees do their work at the same time as others do.

Working with the Fictional Improvement Team

The Fictional Improvement Team determined the existing process could meet customer requirements, with specific improvements to its design. It listed the improvements in **Activity Sheet 22**, on the next page.



Activity Sheet 22 - List specific improvements to the design of your service process.

1. Stream customers by letting them make minor changes by phone rather than in person, such as a change in address.

2. Make sure customers have the necessary documents before they get in line by having the receptionist check their documents as they join the line.

3. Have the receptionist tell customers about the expected waiting times and suggest less busy times.

4. Combine two forms that customers must complete.

5. Eliminate supervisory approval of a customer's eligibility. Train staff and delegate authority.

6. Reduce data entry errors by redesigning the mainframe program to require staff to complete the full "data field".

7. Redeploy and cross-train management and clerical staff to handle peak workloads. Introduce split-shifts so that one group of staff can begin early and take an early lunch and another group can start later and take a later lunch. The office would then be double-staffed during the peak lunch-time period. Extend hours of operation to open earlier and close later.

8. Measure performance to assess if improvements are effective.

What about you?

Use **Worksheet 22**, page 162, to list five ways you can improve the design of your service process so it can meet customer requirements.

When Should You Design a New Process?

If your analysis indicates that, even with major obstacles removed, the process would not be capable of meeting customer requirements, then you probably need to design a completely new process. When you did your benchmarking, you may have also found a significantly different approach to service delivery, either in the process or in the use of technology.

This workbook focuses on redesigning your service process rather than rethinking the whole of the business function.

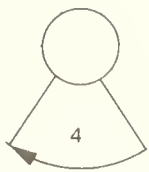
The Role of Technological Innovation

It is not within the scope of this workbook to deal with the effect of new technologies on service processes. However, organizations have achieved major gains by improving service quality by introducing technology, such as automated access, electronic information kiosks.

Heskett, Sasser and Hart¹⁵ note that, to gain acceptance and use of new technologies, you have to communicate effectively with both customers and employees before you introduce them. Management also needs to invest in training staff to use the new technology.

New technologies can empower both customers and employees. Customers are better able to make choices of the required type of service. Employees have better access to information to make better decisions and meet customer needs more quickly.

However, it is essential to improve or redesign a manual process before you introduce technology. You must evaluate the role of technology and understand the benefits clearly before you introduce technology in the service process.



4.7 Developing Action Plans for Controllable Objectives

Having identified improvement objectives for factors within your control, you need to develop an action plan. Decide on actions required to correct the problems and put them in a logical sequence. Decide who should do what, by when and with what resources.

Working with the Fictional Improvement Team

The Fictional Improvement Team used **Activity Sheet 23**, on the next page, to develop an action plan for each improvement objective. The team identified what it had to change to reach its objective. The team also listed who should make the changes, by when and with what resources.

Activity Sheet 23 - Develop an action plan.

Process: Register public.

Process Owner: Manager A

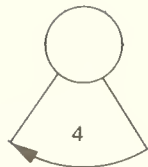
Problem	It takes too long to issue a temporary document
---------	---

Target service standard	Reduce time by 50%, to 2 hours
-------------------------	--------------------------------

Measure	Time in minutes
---------	-----------------

Initial improvement objective: Improve methods by redesign

Corrective Action	By whom?	By when?	What resources?
identify improper or lack of proper documents at earliest contact with customer - prevent wait in line	Receptionist	immediately	none
extend hours	Manager A	immediately	none - redeploy existing staff including management and clerical staff
eliminate extra copying of data	Task Team	two weeks	reprint forms
delegate authority - eliminate wait time for supervisory approvals	Task Team	two weeks	none



What about you?

Using **Worksheet 23**, page 163, develop an action plan. List the problem, the improvement objective and the corrective action. Indicate who should make the change, by when and with what resources.

4.8 Conducting a Pilot Project to Test the Improvements

Before you begin to improve your service process on a full-scale, consider conducting a pilot test. You can then refine the improvements before you make a major commitment. It also lets you "iron out the bugs" and get more employees involved. Tandem Computers has developed the following steps to conduct a pilot test. We have adapted the steps to meet the needs of the OPS.

Define the Objectives of the Pilot Test

Specifically, what improvements are you trying to achieve? Quantify the degree of improvement as the target standard of service. How will you know whether the pilot test was a success or failure? What are the major assumptions to test? What key questions does the pilot test have to answer?

Define the Measures You Will Use and the Data You Will Collect

What quality characteristics will you measure? Will you measure timeliness, reliability, responsiveness, accessibility or cost?

How will you collect and analyze the data? How will you use it? Who will collect the data? Is training required for those people? How will you verify the reliability of the data?

Design the Pilot Test

What should the conditions of the test be? How similar are the test conditions to actual operating conditions? You should design the improvement to work under variable operating conditions.

What factors are likely to affect the pilot test? What assumptions are you making? Document the factors and assumptions.

How can you test these factors? Who should you involve in the pilot test? How will you involve them? What are the communications requirements? What are the training requirements? How long will it take? What effect will the pilot test have on other operations during the test?

Implement the Pilot Test

Implement the test and monitor results. Document the adjustments or modifications you have to make.

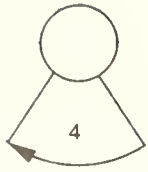
Analyze the Results

Did you achieve the objectives? To what degree? What are the critical factors that affected the outcomes? Can you correct or enhance these factors when you implement improvements on a full scale?

Are there any trends in the data? Are there any strong relationships?

Make Recommendations for Implementation

Is the proposed improvement viable to implement on a full scale? Can you generalize the results of the pilot test? What are the implementation issues? What resources are required to make the implementation successful? What should be done differently?



What are the training requirements? What are the effects on employees? Who do you need to involve in the implementation?

How will you give ongoing feedback on performance to staff?

4.9 Developing Improvement Proposals

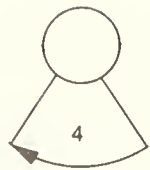
Working with the Fictional Improvement Team

The Fictional Improvement Team identified a number of important improvement opportunities that were not within the service unit's direct control. The team listed these opportunities as recommendations on **Activity Sheet 24**, on the next page.

Activity Sheet 24 - List recommendations for senior management.
<p>Medium to high importance</p> <p>Low direct control</p>
<p>Upgrade equipment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve phone access for customers to inquire before office visit • Reduce downtime • Improve support to computer operations • Improve screen design • Increase system capacity - reduce access and processing time
<p>Acquire budget.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase budget • Increase staff

What about you?

Using **Worksheet 24**, page 164, list recommendations for contributing factors not within your unit's direct control.



What Will Senior Management Want to Know?

Proposals to senior management about policy or budget issues which are not within the service unit's direct control should take into account factors such as the effect on staffing, cost and accommodation. Senior management will most likely ask the following questions:

What is the purpose of the request or proposed action?

How is this proposal positioned within the strategic and operational plans of the ministry, division or branches?

How can this proposal contribute positively to managing in a fiscally-constrained environment?

What opportunities does the proposal present to managing horizontally across the ministry?

What are the financial implications?

What are the implications for management?

What are the expected results?

Will there be consultations with other ministries, divisions or branches?

What is the effect on the workforce?

What are the implications related to accommodation?

What are the financial implications for other ministries, divisions or branches?

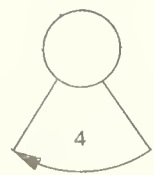
Summary

In Chapter Four, we have described how to:

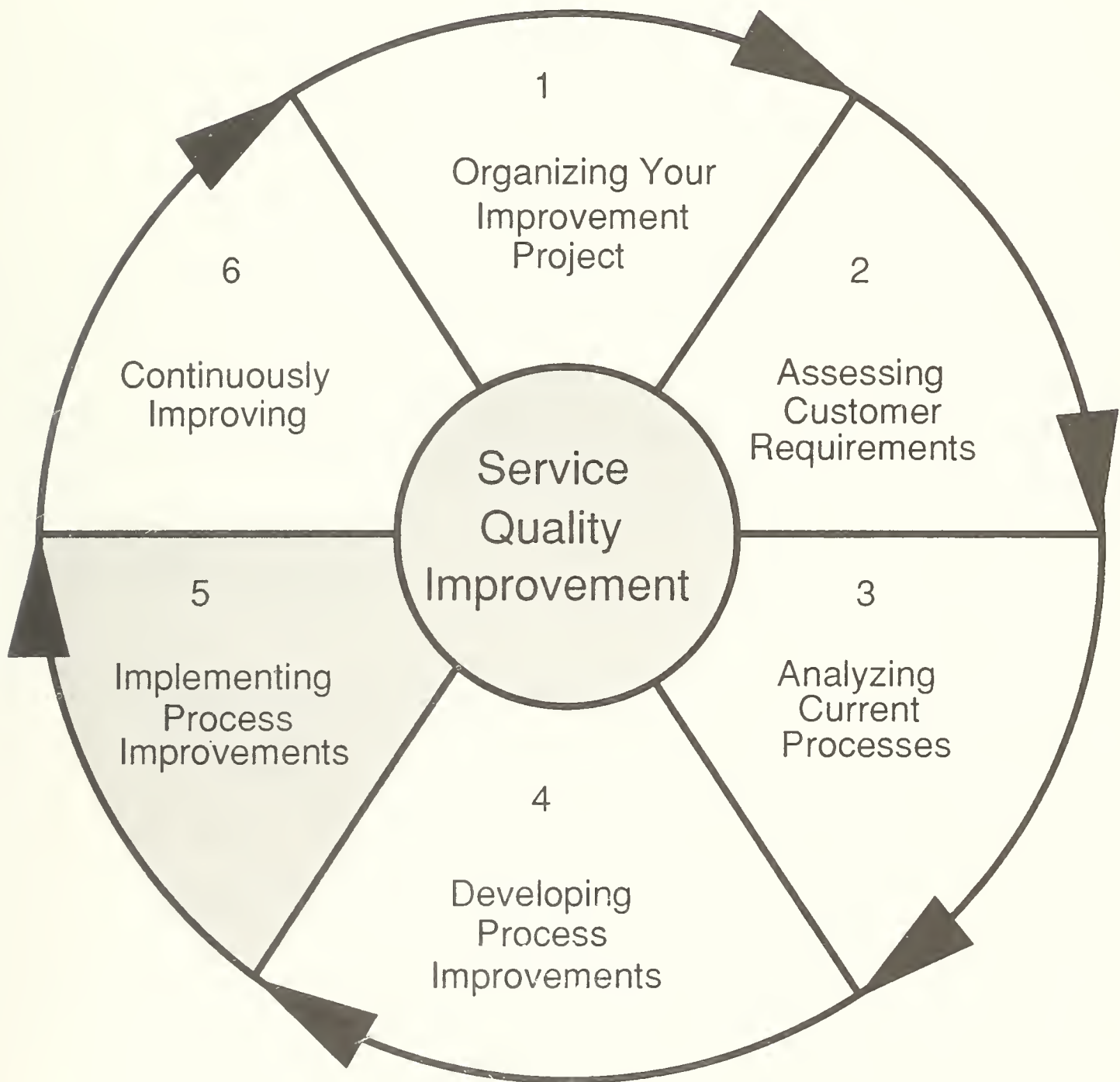
- 4.1 identify and select key problems with service quality;
- 4.2 identify the contributing factors;
- 4.3 analyze the contributing factors;
- 4.4 identify the most important factors within or not within your policies and budgets;
- 4.5 identify design, delivery and communication issues;
- 4.6 restate critical and controllable factors as improvement objectives;
- 4.7 develop action plans for controllable objectives;
- 4.8 conduct a pilot project to test the improvements;
- 4.9 develop improvement proposals.

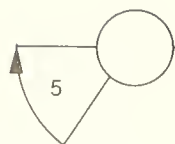
Output An action plan for factors within your service's policies and budgets.

Improvement proposals for factors beyond your service's policies and budgets.



Implementing Process Improvements





CHAPTER FIVE

Implementing Process Improvements

To begin Chapter Five, you need:

Input an action plan to improve factors within your service's policies and budgets.

In this chapter, you will learn how to:

Process

- 5.1 close the Delivery Gap;
- 5.2 support and empower employees;
- 5.3 improve communications;
- 5.4 put it all together.

By the end of Chapter Five, you will be able to:

Output develop a better-managed and motivated workforce;

implement a service process that meets your customers' requirements;

communicate the improvements and the new capability of the service process.

5.1 Closing the Delivery Gap

Both a Delivery Gap and a Communications Gap will affect your efforts to improve service quality.

What Is a Delivery Gap?

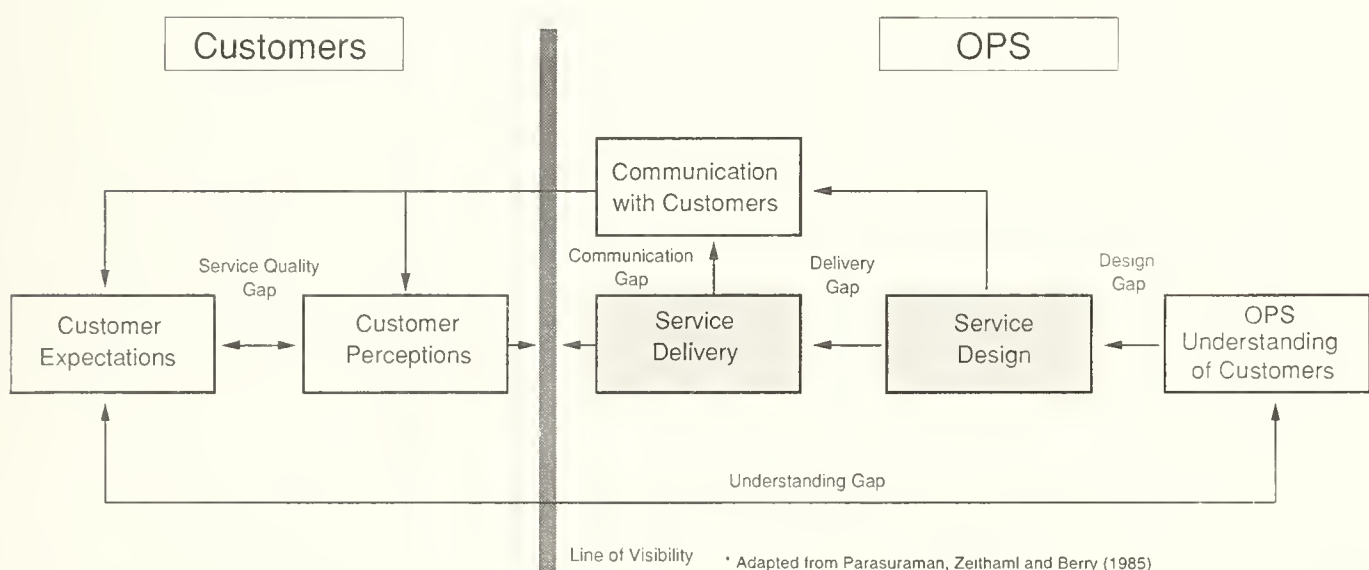
A Delivery Gap is the difference between how service systems are designed to operate and how services are actually delivered. The Delivery Gap focuses on factors related to motivating and managing employees.

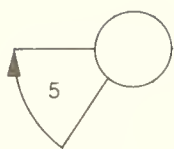
Service delivery often varies

Even when service systems are properly designed to meet customer requirements, differences in service quality may exist because of differences in employee performance.

Some variation in service is expected. In fact, variation is often desirable because it allows a unit to adapt to individual and local circumstances and provide personalized service. However, a wide degree of variation should concern you, since it may be due to causes that the unit can control.

A Service Quality Model





Strategies to Close the Delivery Gap

You can close the Delivery Gap by delivering services the way they are designed and by supporting and empowering service providers to make real improvements.

Employee satisfaction is directly related to customer satisfaction. Employees who have low morale will not perform well. So, they will not meet customer requirements. Employees treatment of their customers often mirrors how they themselves are treated. For this reason, efforts to improve customer service must look at employee relations.

Identifying factors that drive and inhibit change

Since improving service quality often involves making major changes in the culture of an organization, it is often helpful to identify the factors which are driving change and those which are inhibiting it. You can further analyze the factors in terms of how important they are to you and whether or not you can control them.

Change in an organization may be inhibited when employees have:

- no belief in the need for change;
- a fear of change;
- no authority to make needed changes;
- a lack of commitment from all levels of management;
- a lack of improvement tools and training;
- discouragement due to previous efforts having failed.

Change in an organization can happen when:

- the strategic priorities of an organization signal new integrated ways of delivering service;
- customers demand better service;
- the organization gives a priority to improving service;
- resources are unavailable to manage services in traditional ways;
- an organization has realized that improved service quality will save money.

5.2 Supporting and Empowering Employees

While many organizations recognize that empowering employees is essential to improving customer service, it is probably the most difficult concept to implement.

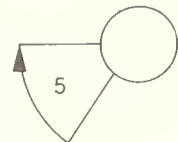
You can support and empower employees by:

- providing information and authority to make decisions;
- recognizing their efforts in delivering service quality;
- continually providing training.

Providing Information and the Authority to Make Decisions

Employees must be included in efforts to improve service quality. They need to have the authority to meet customer needs at the first point of contact. This means building the authority into their jobs. Management's responsibility is to:

- provide a structure and process to involve staff in improvement efforts;



- support the use of good judgement by employees;
- coach staff in evaluating risks and opportunities;
- emphasize on-the-job training rather than control.

Improving service quality requires a support system that gives employees the information required to make informed decisions. Job descriptions need to define roles and responsibilities clearly and the expectations of management regarding their performance.

Providing tools for decision-making

To improve service quality, managers and employees need specific methods and tools to solve problems. At a minimum level, employees need to have the power to do the job demanded by their positions.

Staff must know and understand quality targets and how to get there. They also need the power and motivation to get results. Everyone should be trained in the methods of continuous improvement. Employees in all units and branches should understand and be able to use the basic techniques to improve service quality.

Recognizing Efforts in Delivering Service Quality

Senior management must formally endorse the importance of service quality by communicating a service quality policy. Managers should motivate, recognize and reward staff on an on-going basis for delivering service quality. In assessing good performance, management should use evaluation criteria consistent with customer requirements.

Motivating employees

While the private sector can use such things as bonuses to motivate employees, few such financial incentives are available to the public sector. Without financial incentives, many public sector managers complain they do not have any motivational tools.

Progressive discipline is a clearly defined and systematic process for identifying and solving problems with employee performance. Yet, many managers lack any systematic response for recognizing good employee performance other than during annual performance appraisals.

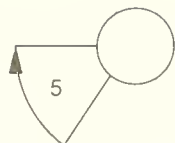
Applying the principles of **progressive motivation** can motivate employees. In using progressive motivation, managers move step-by-step up a hierarchy that recognizes employee performance. Progressive motivation may include:

- verbal praise immediately following action;
- "applause pause" during a staff meeting;
- a letter of recognition from the immediate supervisor documenting the quality of the employee's work;
- a letter of merit from a senior manager after repeated instances of outstanding work;
- a developmental assignment;
- a merit increase.

Recognizing team efforts

Recognizing team efforts gives team members a sense of accomplishment. They feel like "winners". Team recognition may include:

- articles about the team's work in the divisional or ministry newsletter;
- a branch luncheon to recognize specific achievements;
- progress presentations to senior management;
- permission for team members to attend seminars or conferences;



- refreshments provided by senior management at team meetings;
- branch plaques, certificates or letters to personnel files.

Constantly Training Employees

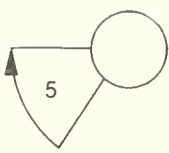
The OPS identified that lack of knowledge and lack of training and experience were among the top obstacles to improving service quality. Many were concerned that employees who have the most direct customer contact are often the least well-trained and least experienced. Many also expressed concerns about the lack of investment in training.

Best Value for Tax Dollars - Improving Service Quality in the Ontario Government¹⁶

Training is absolutely essential to improving service quality. At a minimum, employees need to be trained properly in their own job functions and have adequate support and resources to carry out normal day-to-day responsibilities. As well, front-line employees need to be trained continuously in:

- techniques to identify changes in customers' needs and profiles;
- interpersonal skills;
- service policies and procedures, particularly as improvements are introduced;
- new technologies for service delivery;
- procedures for referring customers to other government services.

As well, management needs ongoing training in human relations, coaching, team leadership, planning and methods of effectively consulting with stakeholders. They also need to know how to use and apply technology in their areas of specialization.



Cross-training for flexibility

Cross-training involves training employees in a work group to perform the functions of others in the same work group. They will then be able to rotate work assignments and replace co-workers during peak periods, illness or vacations.

Training staff to use tools to improve service quality

Management can use specific tools and techniques to improve service quality including:

- brainstorming;
- cause-effect or root-cause analysis;
- Pareto analysis;
- process paths;
- value-added analysis.

Managers should provide:

- an opportunity to learn the techniques and tools;
- the time for teams to analyze service problems and propose solutions;
- an assurance that team proposals will be given serious consideration and, if possible, will be implemented.

By providing the opportunity, necessary tools and support, management is providing the training required to improve service quality and, in turn, supporting and empowering employees.

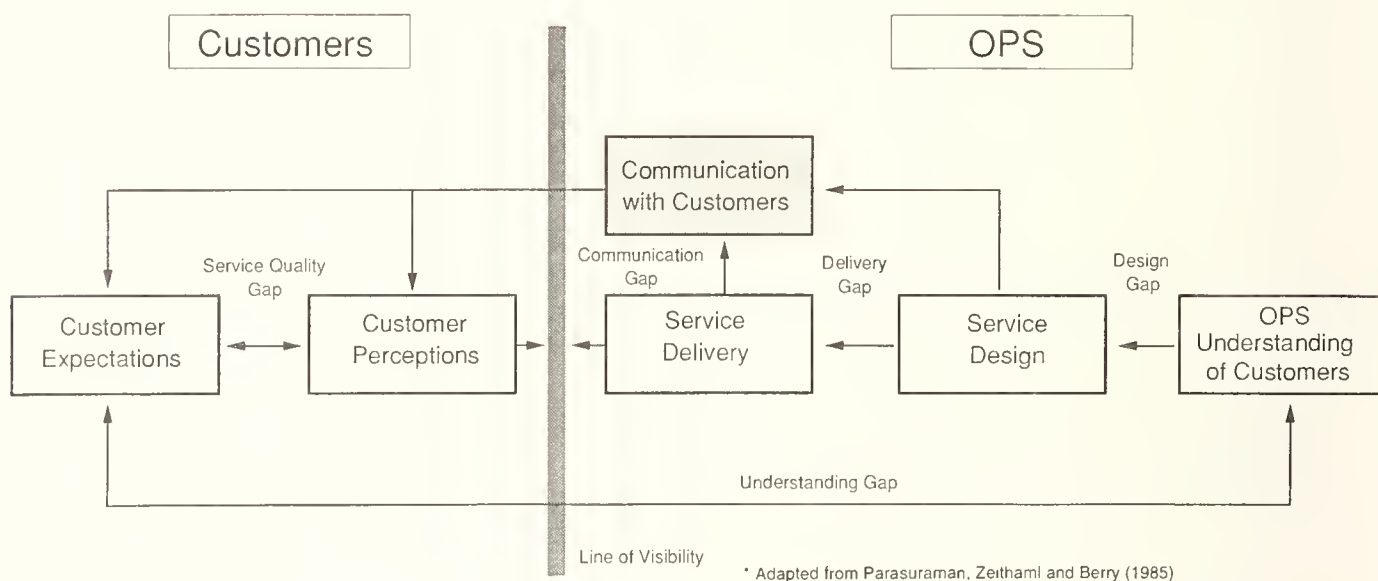
5.3 Improving Communications

The first part of this chapter addressed how to close the Delivery Gap, that is, how to deliver services the way they are designed and how to empower service providers to effect real improvements. The balance of this chapter addresses how to improve communications.

What Is a Communications Gap?

A Communications Gap is the difference between how you actually deliver service and the communications to customers about your service capabilities. A Communications Gap occurs when you do not accurately communicate realistic service capabilities to your customers. If you do not communicate with customers effectively, they will form their own expectations about your service capabilities.

A Service Quality Model



How Do You Close a Communications Gap?

To manage communications more effectively with both internal and external customers, you can:

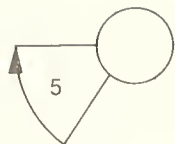
- communicate realistic messages about what you can do;
- communicate where to get information about services;
- improve access by telephone;
- develop internal agreements for customer service;
- communicate choices of service;
- prepare customers to take part in the services;
- continually check if your communications are clear and effective;
- make sure all communications are consistent.

Communicating realistic messages about what you can do

Determine what is possible, communicate a realistic message to your internal and external customers and then deliver the service as promised. Co-ordinate communications, operations and human resources functions to make sure you can keep your service promises. If necessary, "underpromise and overdeliver" rather than the reverse. Make sure your team is clear about:

- what your services are;
- who your internal and external customers are;
- what levels or standards of service both individual employees and the branch or ministry expect.

Remember to let customers know what service standards they should expect from individual employees and the service unit as a whole.



Communicating where to get information about services

You should improve communications about sources of information for services. For example, pay more attention to *Blue Pages* listings and use both government and non-government sources such as Community Information Centres. Make available understandable materials that are sensitive to Ontario's diverse population.

Improving access by telephone service

Customers are very frustrated when they cannot reach you by telephone. If a customer can get needed information by telephone, both they and your service team save time. Put your most knowledgeable and experienced staff in customer enquiry.

Developing internal agreements for customer service

Since a "line of visibility" separates you and your customers, most customers, even internal ones, do not understand your service processes. With internal customers, develop a service agreement based on a mutual understanding of each other's needs and requirements.

Your service agreement with internal customers also requires an understanding of the service process and any policies or constraints affecting your ability to respond to customer needs. Discuss your process path with internal customers, identify their input and specify the time required to respond to their needs.

In developing a service agreement with internal customers, both parties should answer the following questions:

- What do you need from me? What are your requirements?
How fast? How accessible? How reliable? How responsive? How much?
- Are your requirements realistic? Is my service capable of meeting your requirements?
- What do I need from you to meet these requirements? When do I need it?

- How can we work together to improve service?
- Where have most problems occurred in the past such as incomplete or inaccurate input, service delays or a lack of responsiveness? What can we both do to correct these problems?

Collaboratively develop a revised process path which describes the mutual roles and responsibilities of the "customer" and the "supplier". By developing a process path, both your customer and your service team will better understand the service process and their reciprocal roles and responsibilities. This will help to make the service process and operating constraints more visible to your customers.

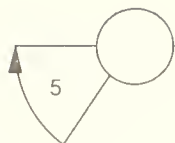
Communicating service choices

Service units should communicate the choices available to customers. For example, ask customers whether they want to wait in line for a service or come back at a less busy time.

By communicating effectively, you may be able to change customer contact patterns, such as time of day and choice of method (for example, in person or by phone). Such alternatives must be accessible and effective. In these ways, employee workloads can be redistributed for greater balance and better service.

Preparing customers to take part in the service

From the start, you can also help to prepare customers for the service by explaining what they need to know about the service process and what is expected of them. Make this information readily accessible by phone and mail.



Continually checking the effectiveness of your communications

Make sure your message has been received and understood. Make sure communication is two-way, to and from customers, and vertically and horizontally within your organization. Develop and implement a plan to communicate process improvements to all those affected by the plan.

Customers need to know what improvements are planned and what to look for in terms of such things as specific time to complete a service. Pay particular attention to how the improvements will affect those in various service roles. Make sure all communication is consistent. Make sure communication is compatible with your service and service standards.

Tailoring all communication to the needs and interests of the customer

Remember the special needs of the diverse population of Ontario in terms of such factors as age, language and culture.

Using Plain Language

Plain language is good communication. It is a way of presenting written information so that it makes sense to the user. But plain language is more than simpler writing and clearer design. It is a process for creating documents that involves readers in developing and testing written materials to meet users' needs. In short, plain language puts the customer first.

No single set of rules can be applied to produce plain language documents. The key is whether readers can understand a document easily. You can use the following guidelines to assess whether written materials use a plain language approach.

Plain language documents:

- use clear, simple, and familiar language;
- use a positive tone that speaks directly to users;
- give information in a well-organized and logical sequence so that users can find important information easily;
- include graphics such as pictures, illustrations and drawings and formats to make the material inviting and easy to read and understand;
- use input from users through consultation and testing of draft documents for understandability;
- are understood the first time they are read.

*Report of the Interministerial Committee on Plain Language*¹⁷

Plain language is cost effective

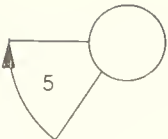
Poorly written documents and forms cost time and money. Weak communications can lead to inefficient operations and a waste of valuable resources. When communication is not effective, you must spend valuable resources answering questions and correcting errors. Plain language can help service units use scarce resources more efficiently.

In Ontario, some ministries are already benefitting from using plain language. The time and money saved means that the branch has more flexibility in allocating budgets and resources.

Examples of plain language: words and phrases

In each case, the "before and after" words mean the same thing. But the "after" is easier to understand, more familiar and concrete.

Before	After
utilize	use
remuneration	pay
strategize	plan
with regard to	about
in the event that	if
negative patient care outcome	death
revenue enhancement	a tax increase
impact	effect
ingest	swallow
from that point in time	then
for the purpose of	to
commence	begin
endeavour	try
failed to	didn't
with respect to	about
inasmuch as	since
by means of	by
subsequent to	following



Plain Language: A Check List

The following checklist will help you assess your communications.

Audience

- ▶ Who is likely to use this document?
- ▶ What is the best format for your message to reach your audience?

Purpose

- ▶ Why are you writing this document?
- ▶ What do you want to say?
- ▶ Have you included the most important information?

Organization

- ▶ Have you based the order of your material on the user's needs?
- ▶ Does the important information come first?
- ▶ Have you said what you have to say, and no more?

Tone

- ▶ Have you considered your user's needs and written directly to the user?
- ▶ Do you sound helpful, appropriately personal?
- ▶ Does your text read like informal conversation?

Style

- ▶ Have you limited the length of your paragraphs?
- ▶ Are your sentences short and clear?
- ▶ Have you used familiar words, consistent terms and concrete examples?

Design

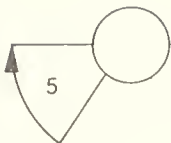
- ▶ Is your design attractive and easy to read, with lots of white space and breaks in the text?
- ▶ Have you helped people find the information they need?
- ▶ Are the book's contents described in your introduction?
- ▶ Have you included a table of contents?
- ▶ Can the user understand your graphics and illustrations?
- ▶ Do the graphics and illustrations help your text?

Testing materials with your audience

- ▶ Have you asked a sample group of users to check your draft materials?

*Plain Language Clear and Simple*¹⁸

Make sure all written communications such as forms, brochures, signs, letters, memos, application forms and guides follow the principles of plain language and design.



5.4 Putting It All Together

Working with the Fictional Improvement Team

The Fictional Improvement Team now had an action plan to make improvements in the design of their service process. However, when the team categorized contributing factors, it identified a number of delivery problems:

- ▶ Staff felt they needed more training and support in using the computer system.
- ▶ Staff did not really understand new policy and legislation changes.
- ▶ Staff were not scheduled to meet peak hours of service.
- ▶ Morale was at an all time low. Staff felt management was only criticizing them and not appreciating their efforts.

Employee suggestions to address delivery problems

Using suggestions from employees on how to deal with the delivery problems, the service unit made the following changes:

- ▶ Following staff training on the information system, a help desk was set up within the unit to give staff extra help in using the computer system.
- ▶ Staff set up a buddy system so less confident members always had a peer for help.
- ▶ Management started cross training.
- ▶ Policy group gave staff a comprehensive but plain language briefing in the new rules. A document *Questions You Always Wanted to Know But Were Afraid to Ask* was prepared and distributed to each unit employee.

- ▶ The team set up an office schedule for office coverage that resulted in more staff available for peak hours. Management and employees rotated schedules to make this extra service available for customers. This plan also gave management the opportunity to meet customers on a regular basis.
- ▶ A *Here's What I Think Would Help* form was developed and distributed to all staff. The Fictional Improvement Team reviewed the following suggestions and introduced them into unit activities:
 - Customers were routed into two different areas for service: one line-up for routine matters and one for non-routine. Staff rotated between these two areas so they would have "light" days interspersed with more "challenging problem" days.
 - Every Friday was declared "casual day" and employees were encouraged to take advantage of this.
 - Celebration days were organized on a regular basis during which the unit celebrated customer service successes. For example, the unit celebrated one employee who had helped a customer find a private office to feed and change her baby. Another employee was recognized for making suggestions to redesign the new signs in the unit.

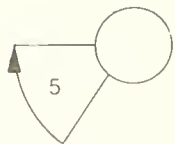
Customer service standards determined by the improvement team were circulated and made the basis for all employees performance evaluations. Employees got feedback on a regular basis as managers often made informal performance evaluations.

Several employees got letters of "**progressive motivation**" detailing their high level of customer service. Senior management got copies of those letters and senior ministry executives then praised these employees for their contributions.

A story praising the team's efforts was written in the ministry's newsletter.

What about you?

Use **Worksheet 25**, page 165 to pull it all together. Review your action plan and list three delivery problems. Ask employees to suggest ways to deal with these problems. List their suggestions.



The team made changes to the service process

From the beginning of its efforts to improve service quality, the team was well aware that communication gaps between the service unit and its customers were largely responsible for their service quality gap. With input from all employees, the team made the following changes to the service process:

- ▶ The team redesigned the registration form for applicants and tested it with customers. The new form was written in plain language and had a section for customer complaints.
- ▶ Every ministry office (even when it was not a registration office) was provided with information about the registration process for customers.
- ▶ The existing ministry hot line was changed to give specific information to registration service customers.
- ▶ The registration office changed its signs to make it easy for customers to see required documents, average daily line-ups, alternate ways to get service (by phone or mail), and available languages.
- ▶ Staff told customers about service standards they could expect from the registration office.
- ▶ Staff monitored line-ups to make sure customers were prepared and in the right line-up.
- ▶ The registration unit developed a customer service agreement with its computer support division to improve back-up.
- ▶ Staff developed a computer program to make sure customer complaints were recorded in the computer system. Staff could then use information to make changes in the next round of improvements. In instances where the complaint identified a problem not in the control of the service unit, the team sent a copy of the complaint to the right area of the division or ministry.
- ▶ At the end of each interview, customers got a suggestion or comment card to complete. This became a part of the customer research base for continuous improvement.

Summary

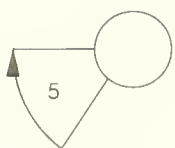
In Chapter Five, we have described how to:

- 5.1 close the Delivery Gap;
- 5.2 support and empower employees;
- 5.3 improve communications;
- 5.4 put it all together.

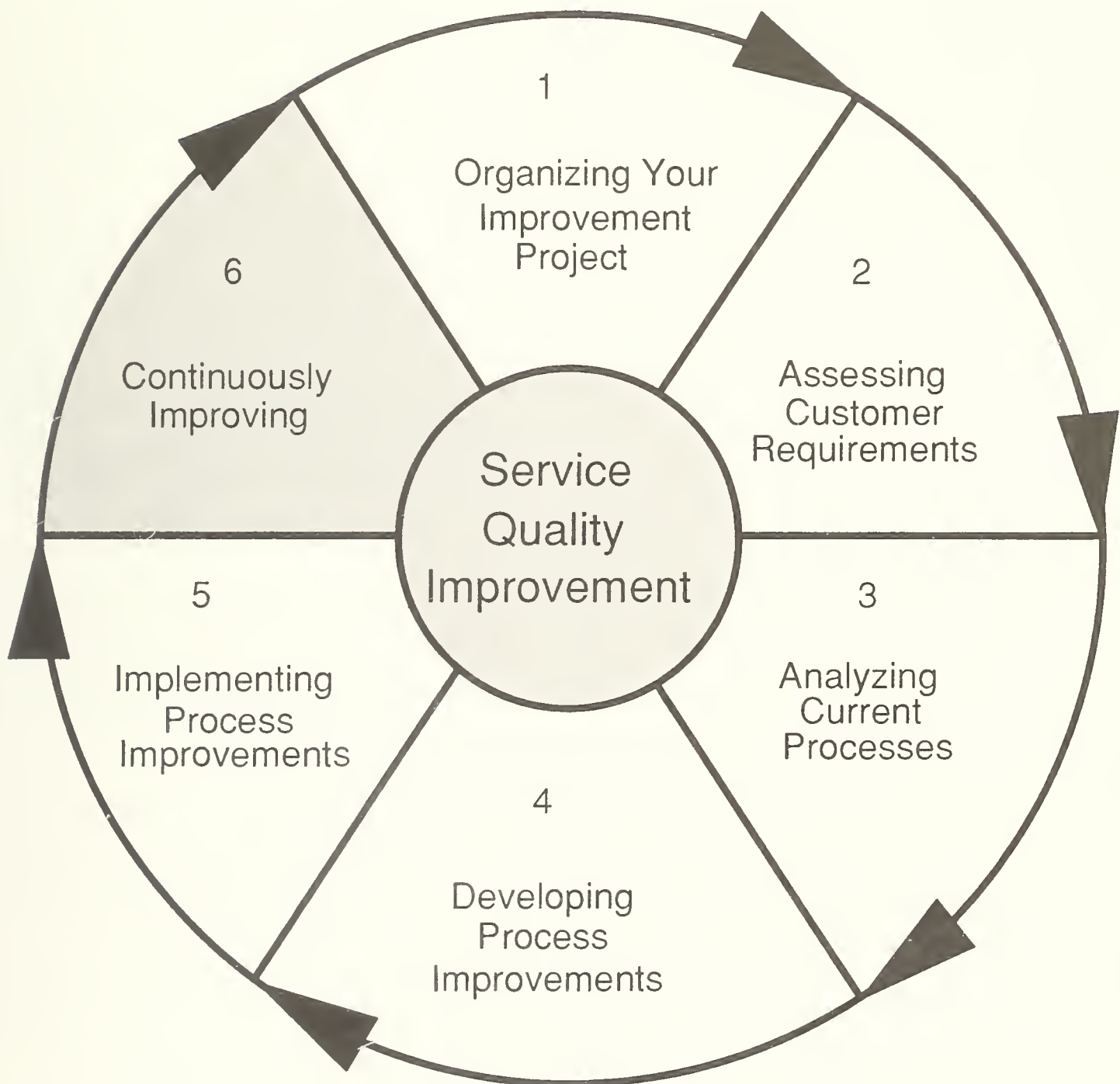
Output A better-managed and motivated workforce.

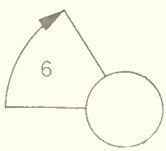
 A service process that meets customer requirements.

 Communication of the improvements and the new capability
 of the service process.



Continuously Improving





CHAPTER SIX

Continuously Improving

To begin this Chapter Six, you need:

Input a better managed and motivated workforce;
a service process that meets customer requirements;
communication about the improvements and the new
capability of the service process.

In this chapter, you will learn how to:

Process

- 6.1 give continuous feedback to promote organizational learning;
- 6.2 continuously repeat and refine the improvement process;
- 6.3 certify process improvements.

By the end of Chapter Six, you will be able to:

Output continuously improve service quality at a lower cost;
give the best value for tax dollars.

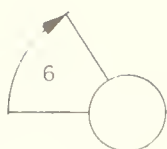
6.1 Giving Continuous Feedback to Promote Organizational Learning

To improve service quality and produce lasting results, the Ontario Public Service needs an improvement strategy and a systematic approach to problem solving that constantly adds value and eliminates waste. Continuous improvement involves ongoing learning between customers and the OPS about what is important to customers and what level of performance is possible. Continuous improvement of performance requires feedback.

What Is Continuous Improvement?

Continuous improvement means encouraging and empowering staff to improve service standards. It means giving staff a greater sense of control and encouraging effective decision making at all levels. It means clearly defining the limits of authority to quicken and improve the decision-making process.

Continuous improvement is:	Continuous improvement is not:
a philosophy about the way you want to do business	a new "program" or "flavour of the month"
always finding a better way	"If it ain't broke, don't fix it".
a structured, disciplined approach to identifying and solving problems and developing lasting solutions	fire-fighting, crisis-management
conveyed by management actions	conveyed by slogans and banner-waving
long-term way of doing business	a short-term "project"
self-directed and involving all employees	command and control
applicable to all business processes	limited to particular problems
all problems seen as opportunities for improvement	problems are reflecting management's inability



The Importance of Clear Performance Standards

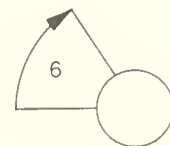
Clear performance standards increase predictable and consistent performance. Standards give employees and management a set of simple rules and make it possible to solve problems constructively and non-judgementally.

It is important to standardize the best practices in your service processes. You should document the best process and then keep to it until you know a better way and can revise the standardized work.

What are the implications for management?

Fitzsimmons¹⁹ has developed the chart below to present the features of a traditional organization and a "learning" organization.

Organizational Structure and the Work Environment		
Dimension	Traditional Structure	Proposed Structure
Assumption about the system	Closed system	Open system
Job design	Division of labour	Flexibility
Structure	Rigid	Fluid
Relation to others	Individual	Teamwork
Employee orientation	Task	Customer
Management's role	Supervisor	Coach
Technology's role	Replacing human effort	Assisting service delivery
Information	Efficiency	Effectiveness
Work scheduling	Push	Pull



Continuous improvement is a way of doing business that involves everyone. It is an on-going commitment to improvement that results in better service at lower cost. Continuous improvement involves:

- the building of consensus;
- decentralized decision-making;
- cross-functional co-ordination and collaboration;
- frequent consultation, information sharing and problem solving with the union.

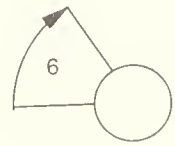
The better your organization gets, the more difficult it becomes to make improvements. At the beginning of an improvement effort, you will achieve the easiest improvements and make gains readily. As the improvement effort continues, it will become more difficult to gain improvements.

At this point, it is important to assess the cost and benefits of improvement. Will the effect on customer satisfaction justify the efforts? Or should you devote your efforts to improving another service quality basic? Once again, the best way to find out is to ask your customers.

Setting Progressively Higher Target Standards

It may take some time for you to reach your service quality targets. This is particularly true when resources are limited. Progress will always take place in increments - a few will be very large, but most will be small.

The object is always to give better and better value for tax dollars by providing services that meet customers' needs. As a first step, set achievable targets for improving service quality. The strategy is to set progressively higher target standards until you can meet customer expectations.



6.2 Continuously Repeating and Refining the Improvement Process

Once you have completed the improvement process for one service, select another service. Continue to repeat the improvement process until you have assessed, analyzed and improved all major processes.

The key to sustained improvement is direct measurement and feedback from customers to staff on the service basics. Improvement also requires on-going training and clear links between service quality and recognizing and rewarding the efforts of staff.

You can also improve the improvement method itself. Refine and adapt the method to meet your requirements. Be consistent and use a systematic approach.

Standardizing the improvements

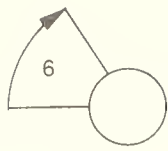
As you reach target standards, you should standardize the improvement process itself. Everyone should use the same approach and then set a new and higher standard. You should always aim for at least a 50% improvement until you meet the customers' requirements.

6.3 Certifying Process Improvements

To promote organizational learning, you should document your improvement efforts properly. By gathering baseline data and establishing current performance standards, you can compare results against target standards and your customer's requirements.

You should undertake improvement efforts with a clear picture of your current situation. Because improvement is an ongoing process taking place over a long period of time, it is sometimes difficult to remember how far you have really gone. Measuring progress can be highly motivating when staff can see the "before and after" picture.

Senior management can support improvement efforts by certifying them. By recording and documenting the difference between pre-improvement service standards and target standards, management will be able to certify that improvement has really occurred. Certified improvements can be used as benchmarks within the ministry and OPS. This will help to promote organizational learning, the principal process by which management innovation occurs. In learning organizations, the whole enterprise is engaged in a process of productivity improvement - from individuals engaged in their own development programs, through teams working on service delivery problems, to the senior management team's efforts in gaining strategic understanding and the provision of organizational guidance.



Summary

In Chapter Six, we have described how to:

- 6.1 give continuous feedback to promote organizational learning;
- 6.2 continuously repeat and refine the improvement process;
- 6.3 certify process improvements.

Output Continuous improvement to service quality at a lower cost.

The best value for tax dollars.

WORKSHEETS SECTION

From Chapter One - Organizing Your Improvement Project

Worksheet 1 - List your major services or functions.
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Worksheet 2 - Evaluate each major service or function.

Criteria	Major Services			
* reversed rating				
Effect (if service improved) on service quality and priorities				
Seriousness of problem				
Possible/practical to improve				
Resources required *				
Time required to make improvements *				
Management's commitment to action visible				
Others to learn from this improvement				
Total				

High = 3

Medium = 2

Low = 1

From Chapter Two - Assessing Customer Requirements

Worksheet 3 - Identify your customers.	
Output (what you produce)	Those who receive your output (customers)

Worksheet 4 - Identify your suppliers.

Input (what you require)	Those who receive your input (suppliers)

Worksheet 5 - Describe the expectations and perceptions of your customers.

Service

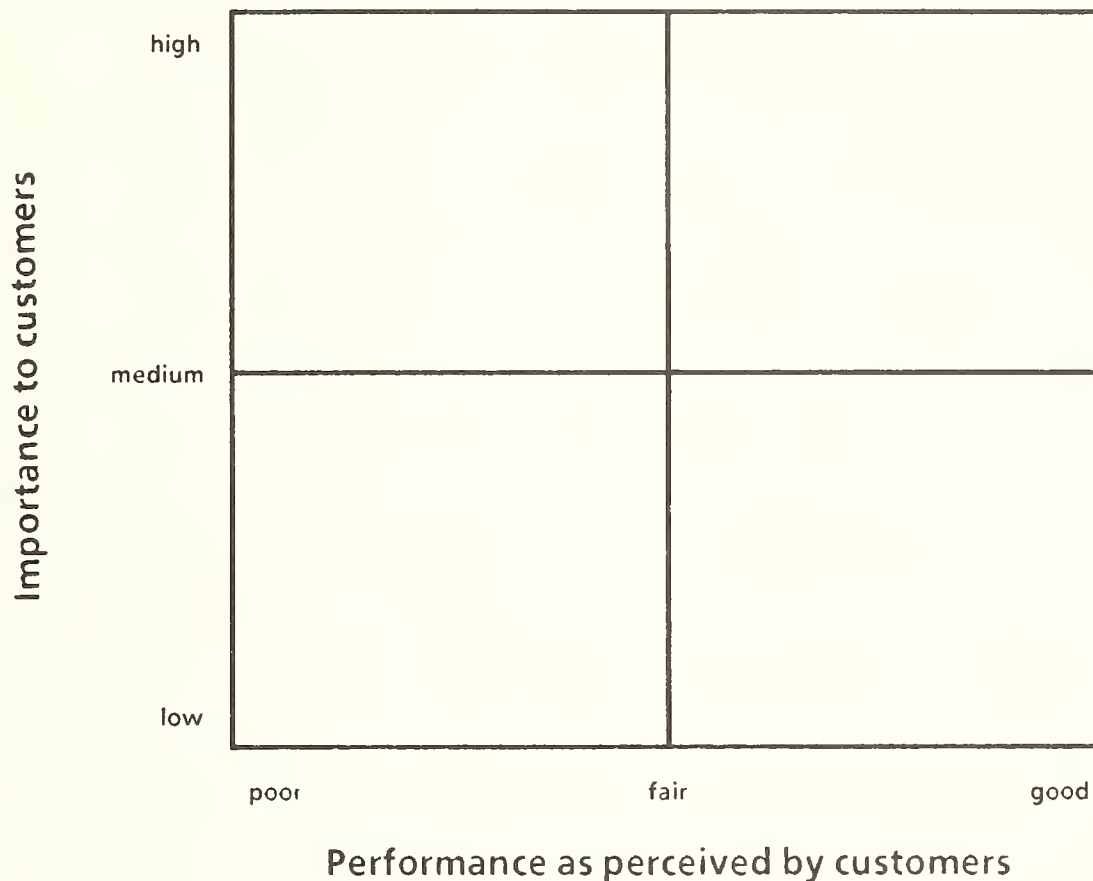
Service Quality Basics	Customer Expectations	Customer Perceptions
How fast?		
How reliable?		
How responsive?		
How accessible?		
How much?		

Worksheet 6 - Describe the service quality measures and requirements of your customers.

Service

Service Quality Basics	Measures	Requirements
How fast?		
How reliable?		
How responsive?		
How accessible?		
How much?		

Worksheet 7 - Opportunity Matrix.



On the vertical axis, plot how your customers rate the importance of different service processes. On the horizontal axis plot how your customers rate staff performance.

- Identify:
- ☐ where customers are getting the best value;
 - ☐ where a Service Gap exists;
 - ☐ where you could redeploy resources.

From Chapter Three - Analyzing Current Processes

Worksheet 8 - List your major service processes and process owners.	
Major Service Processes	Process Owners

Worksheet 9 - List your key activities.

Major Process

Key Activities	Order	Activity Owner
	1	
	2	
	3	
	4	
	5	
	6	

Worksheet 10a - List your key tasks.		
Major Process		
Key Activity 1		
Key Tasks	Order	Task Owner

Worksheet 10b - List your key tasks.

Major Process

Key Activity 2

Key Tasks	Order	Task Owner

Worksheet 10c - List your key tasks.		
Major Process		
Key Activity 3		
Key Tasks	Order	Task Owner

Worksheet 10d - List your key tasks.		
Major Process		
Key Activity 4		
Key Tasks	Order	Task Owner

Worksheet 10e - List your key tasks.		
Major Process		
Key Activity 5		
Key Tasks	Order	Task Owner

Worksheet 10f - List your key tasks.		
Major Process		
Key Activity 6		
Tasks	Order	Task Owner

Worksheet 11a - Create an activity level process path.

Worksheet 11b - Create a task level process path.

**Worksheet 11c - Calculate the average processing time
and cycle time.**

Worksheet 12 - Summarize the service requirements and standards of your customers.

Service Process

Service Quality Basics	Measures (unit of measurement)	Customer Requirements	Current Service Standard	Target Service Standard
How fast?				
How reliable?				
How responsive?				
How accessible?				
How much?				

From Chapter Four - Developing Process Improvements

Worksheet 13 - Select your first service quality problem.			
Service Quality Problem	Frequency	Effect	Duration

Worksheet 14 - Write a problem statement.

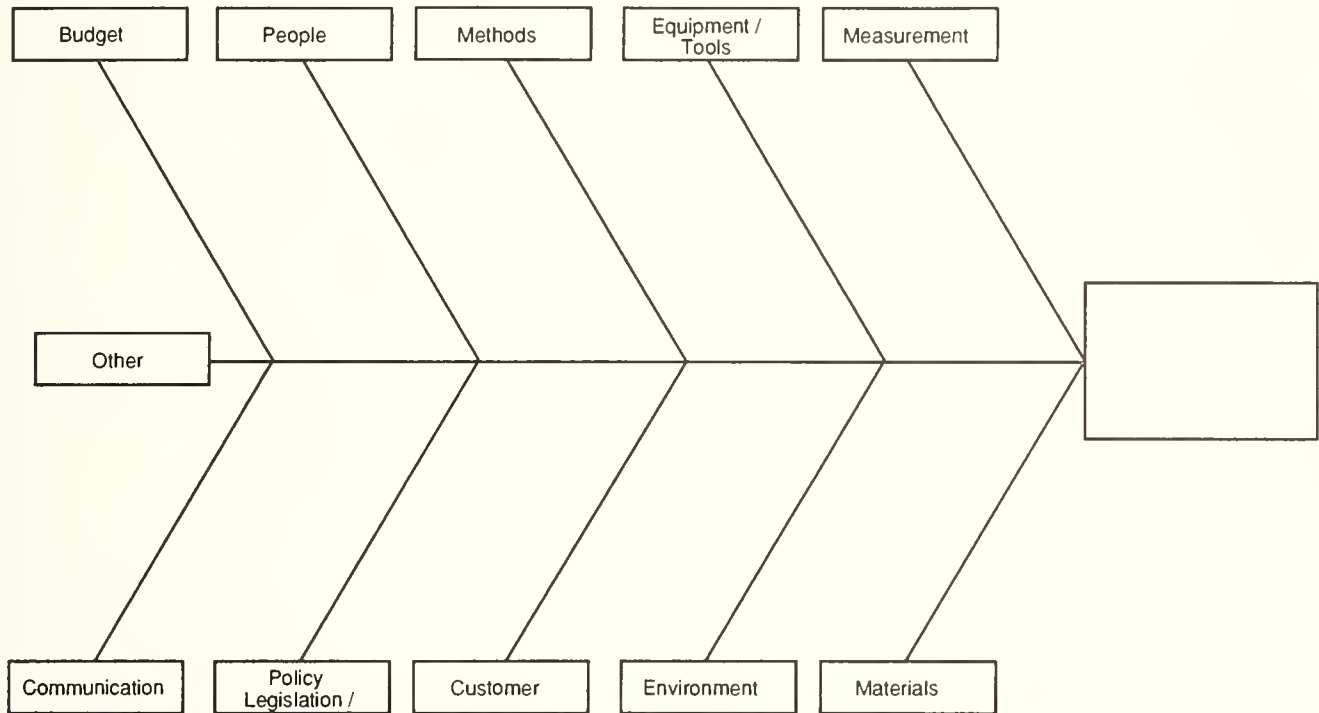
Worksheet 15 - Do a cost-benefit analysis.

Options	Cost	Benefits

Worksheet 16 - List and categorize the contributing factors to your problem.

Possible Contributing Factors	Type of Factor

Worksheet 17 - Construct a cause-effect diagram.



Worksheet 18 - Construct a Pareto diagram.

Worksheet 19 - Sort the contributing factors by degrees of importance and control.

Possible Contributing Factor	Importance	Direct Control
People		
Communication		
Customer		
Methods		
Measurement		
Equipment / Tools		
Budget		
Legislation / Policy		
Materials		
Environment		

Worksheet 20 - Sort contributing factors into design, delivery or communications issues.

Design	Delivery	Communications with Customers
Customer		
People		
Methods		
Equipment and Tools		
Measurement		
Budget		
Legislation / Policy		
Materials		
Environment		

Worksheet 21 - List your improvement objectives.
Medium to high importance High direct control

Worksheet 22 - List specific improvements to the design of your service process.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

Worksheet 23 - Develop an action plan.

Process:

Process Owner:

Problem

Target service standard

Measure

Initial improvement objective:

Corrective Action	By whom?	By when?	What resources?

Worksheet 24 - List recommendations for senior management.
Medium to high importance Low direct control

From Chapter Five - Implementing Process Improvements

Worksheet 25 - Put it all together.

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A p p e n d i c e s



**YOUR VIEWS
OF ONTARIO
GOVERNMENT
SERVICE**



What do you think about the service of the Ontario government?

The Ontario government wants to improve the service it gives the public.

This independent survey has been commissioned to find out what Ontario Public Service employees think about service to the public. Please help by completing this questionnaire.

The survey has been sent to employees at all levels of all Ministries. It will therefore provide information on services that the Ontario government as a whole provides to the public. Results will not be used to compare individual Ministries.

Your answers are strictly confidential, and your participation is anonymous. Your comments will receive careful consideration.

Please return this questionnaire *no later than Wednesday July 31, 1991* in the enclosed envelope. The postage is already paid.

Thank you for your contribution!

1. Overall quality of service

From the public's perspective, how good is the service provided by each level of government? (Circle one number in each row.)

Government	Quality of Service (according to the public)						
	<i>Extremely Poor</i>			<i>Extremely Good</i>			
The federal government (Ottawa)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The provincial government (Ontario)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Municipal governments (city, town)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. Services you get from others in the OPS

Below are nine general services you get from other OPS employees.

- How important is each type of service to you in your present job?
- How good a job does the OPS do in providing each service?

Services you get from other OPS employees	How important is this service in your work?							How good a job does the OPS do in providing this service?						
	<i>Not at all Important</i>			<i>Extremely Important</i>				<i>Extremely Poor</i>			<i>Extremely Good</i>			
Accommodation and transportation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Human resources	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Administration	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Purchasing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Information, communication, marketing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Information technology	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Legal services	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Finance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Policy formulation and program design	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. Categories of service

The Ontario government provides four general types of service directly to the public:

- Information
- Registration
- Financial Assistance
- Enforcement and Justice

Note that these categories do not include services specific to single ministries such as Provincial Parks, Recreation, LCBO, Tourism and direct health care provided by nursing homes. These are beyond the scope of this survey.

Which one category below best describes your present work in the OPS?

- ☐ **Information**
- ☐ **Registration**
- ☐ **Financial Assistance**
- ☐ **Enforcement and Justice**
- ☐ **Other (e.g. Tourism, Recreation, Emergency Response Services, the LCBO, direct health care.)**

INFORMATION SERVICES. *Examples are:*

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <i>Inquiry, referral;</i> | General inquiries, consumer complaints, employment inquiries, interpretation of laws. |
| <i>Counselling;</i> | Vocational rehabilitation, advice to small businesses, advice to industry, apprenticeship counselling. |
| <i>Public awareness;</i> | Environmental issues, social services, consumer information, safe-driving campaigns. |

REGISTRATION SERVICES. *Examples are:*

- | | |
|---|--|
| <i>Licensing, permits, certificates;</i> | Fishing licences, lotteries and bingos, births, deaths marriages, trades qualifications. |
| <i>Examinations, testing;</i> | Pesticide use, hunters' safety, apprenticeship programs, drivers' licences. |
| <i>Registration;</i> | Land registry, company names, child care facilities, firearms registration. |

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES. *Examples are:*

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <i>Grants, rebates;</i> | Northern travel grants, Ontario Tax Credits, senior citizens' tax rebates, farm tax rebates, rent rebates. |
| <i>Financial assistance;</i> | Family Benefits Allowance, Guaranteed Annual Income Supplement for seniors, loans to business, student loans, Northern Ontario Heritage Fund. |
| <i>Insurance claims;</i> | Workers' compensation, OHIP, emergency measures claims, accidents on government property. |

ENFORCEMENT & JUSTICE SERVICES. *Examples are:*

- | | |
|--|---|
| <i>Inspections, audits, investigations;</i> | Construction inspections, vehicle inspections, pollution monitoring, employment standards investigations. |
| <i>Debt collection, recovery of overpayments;</i> | Student loan repayments, income maintenance overpayments, motor vehicle accident claims. |
| <i>Justice;</i> | Child custody, Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), probation and parole, human rights. |

4. *Opinions about the service of the Ontario government*

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each statement below? (Circle one number in each row.)

Opinion (based on interviews with the public and OPS employees)	Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree
Ontario government service keeps getting more complicated.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overall, the service of the Ontario government is getting better.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Ontario government services provide good value for taxpayers' money.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The language used in forms and documents is hard to understand.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It often seems that regulations and policies are not applied consistently.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I believe that the Ontario government treats members of the public equally, regardless of gender, age, race, culture or ability.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Staff dealing directly with the public are properly trained and qualified.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Staff are overworked and cannot give customers individual attention.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Improving the quality of service to the public should save money.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel that people in cities get better service than do people in towns and rural areas.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

5. *Quality of service*

Who is the primary customer of your services? (Check one box only.)

- ☐ *The public. (This includes residents of Ontario, private businesses, service professionals, and transfer payment agencies.)*
- ☐ *The government of Ontario and employees of the Ontario Public Service.*

The questions on the following page focus on your interaction with customers.

- If your area's primary function is to provide services to the public (i.e., you checked the first box above), think of your customers as members of the public.
- If your area's primary function is to provide services within the OPS (i.e., you checked the second box above), think of your customers as the OPS.

Please describe your present job using the statements on the following page.

- If a service element does not apply to your work, don't answer the questions for it.
- Your immediate work group includes people with whom you work and those for whom you are responsible.

Service elements	How important is this element to your customer?		How good is your own performance on this element?		How good is the performance of your work group?	
	<i>Not at all Important</i>	<i>Extremely Important</i>	<i>Extremely Poor</i>	<i>Extremely Good</i>	<i>Extremely Poor</i>	<i>Extremely Good</i>
Our service is there when customers need it.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
Employees in our service take pride in their work.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
It is easy for customers to get to the right person and department.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
We are courteous and helpful.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
We are knowledgeable and competent.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
We communicate clearly and are easy to talk to.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
Customers get what they need in a reasonable period of time.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
We understand customers' needs fully.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
We protect customers' confidentiality.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
The service is good value for customers' tax dollars.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
Procedures are easy for customers to understand and complete.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
We are direct and give straight answers to customers' questions.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
Customers get a quick response to their requests.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
We provide up-to-date, accurate information.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
When customers talk to different employees, we provide consistent information.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
Our office is in a convenient location.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7	
Our office is designed with the customer's needs in mind.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7		1 2 3 4 5 6 7	

6. Opportunities for improving customer service

Listed below are 21 items that could be barriers to providing good customer service. Indicate how much, if at all, each barrier affects your service to your customers.

- If you deal with the public, either directly or in a supervisory role, think of barriers as things that affect your service to the public.
- If your customers are others within the OPS, think of barriers as things that affect your service to the OPS.

Possible barriers to good customer service	Not a Barrier							Critical Barrier
1. Lack of clear language in forms and documents	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
2. Over-sensitivity to political considerations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
3. Lack of staff training	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
4. Lack of affordable access, such as 1-800 telephone numbers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
5. Lack of specific knowledge of other Ministries' services	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
6. Lack of cooperation among provincial Ministries	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
7. Lack of cooperation within your own Ministry	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8. Lack of sufficient staff — high workloads	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
9. Internal bureaucracy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
10. Labour-management relations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
11. Overly complicated legislation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
12. Slow approval processes — too many layers of approval	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
13. Outdated equipment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
14. Lack of financial incentives for good performance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
15. Lack of cooperation between the OPS and other levels of government	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
16. Low morale within the OPS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
17. Vague policies	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
18. Too many regulations and guidelines	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
19. Too many services are offered	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
20. Lack of strong support from management	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
21. Lack of authority to make decisions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

In terms of your own work, which three items or barriers on the preceding page represent the best opportunities for improving customer service? (Circle three numbers below.)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21

We are interested in your suggestions for improving the government's customer service. Please write your ideas on the back cover.

7. What makes good service?

When customers contact you on a routine matter, they probably have a good idea of the time their business will take. They may be pleasantly surprised if things go more quickly than planned, or annoyed if the business takes too long.

Please indicate below what you consider a reasonable and acceptable level of service in your own work.

What do you consider satisfactory service when a customer **writes** to your office?

How many days should it take from the time your office receives a customer's letter until the appropriate reply is sent? (Circle your choice.)

Number of days: 5 or less 6 to 10 11 to 14 15 to 19 20 to 24 25 or more

What do you consider satisfactory service when a customer **telephones** your office?

How many rings should the customer wait before someone answers the phone?

Number of rings: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 or more

What percent of the time should the customer expect a busy signal?

Percentage of times: 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 or more

What percent of the time is it reasonable for you to put the customer on hold?

Percentage of times: 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 or more

What is a reasonable length of time for the customer to wait on hold?

Number of minutes: 0 1/2 1 2 3 4 5 or more

What is a reasonable number of transfers for the customer to expect before getting the right person?

Number of transfers: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 or more

What is an acceptable amount of time for the entire activity — from the time the customer dials the number until she/he hangs up?

Number of minutes: 5 10 15 20 30 40 50 60 or more

What is the maximum number of people the customer should have to deal with to get the service?

Number of people: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 or more

What do you consider satisfactory service when a customer **visits** your office to obtain a routine "over-the-counter" service?

How many minutes is it reasonable for the customer to wait before someone first makes contact with him/her?

Number of minutes: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 or more

How many minutes should the customer have to wait in any line-up?

Number of minutes: 1 2-4 5-9 10-14 15-19 20-29 30 or more

What is an acceptable amount of time for the entire activity — from the time the customer enters the office until he/she leaves?

Number of minutes: 5 10 15 20 30 40 50 60 or more

How many different people should the customer have to deal with in order to get service?

Number of people: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 or more

For some services, customers may **make an appointment** with you or someone in your office.

What is a reasonable number of days from the time the customer makes the appointment until the date of the appointment?

Number of days: 1 2-4 5-9 10-14 15-19 20-29 30 or more

How long should the customer have to wait once she/he arrives for the appointment?

Number of minutes: 1 2-4 5-9 10-14 15-19 20-29 30 or more

What is the maximum number of people that the customer should have to deal with to get what she/he needs?

Number of people: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 or more

8. *Good service in your community*

Answer the following questions about your own community.

1. What type of parking should the Ontario government provide in your community?

- ☐ *Parking at a reasonable rate.*
- ☐ *Free parking.*
- ☐ *The government should not be concerned with providing parking.*

2. Should customers be able to take public transportation to Ontario government offices?

- ☐ *Yes*
- ☐ *No*
- ☐ *There is no public transportation in my community.*

3. Should translation into languages other than English or French be available? (Check each type of service you think should be available in other languages.)

- ☐ *Publications*
- ☐ *Over-the-counter services*
- ☐ *Telephone inquiries*
- ☐ *No other translations should be available*

4. Office hours in most Ontario government offices are 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM. Should we extend these hours of service? (Choose one answer.)

- ☐ *Office hours should not be extended.*
- ☐ *Offices should be open one or more evenings a week.*
- ☐ *Offices should be open Saturdays.*
- ☐ *Offices should be open both one or more evenings and Saturdays.*

5. If you think that Ontario government offices should be open some evenings and/or Saturdays, are you in favour of reduced hours of service during the normal business day?

- ☐ *No, the extended hours should be in addition to present hours of operation.*
- ☐ *Yes, they could open later some weekday mornings.*
- ☐ *Yes, they could close one weekday.*

6. Should the Ontario government make services available to the public by means of automated machines? These might operate like banking machines.

- ☐ *Yes*
- ☐ *No*
- ☐ *No opinion*

7. Should the Ontario government make its on-line computer services available to the public?

- ☐ *Yes*
- ☐ *No*
- ☐ *No opinion*

8. Are you in favour of having a one-stop government centre where people can get different services in one building?

- ☐ *No: not in favour.*
- ☐ *Yes: for Ontario government services only.*
- ☐ *Yes: a single office for both provincial and municipal services.*

9. You and your work

All of your answers are confidential. They will be combined with the answers of other OPS employees to form general conclusions.

1. Where do you presently work?

- ☐ *Metropolitan Toronto*
- ☐ *City of 100,000 people or more*
- ☐ *City of 10,000 to 100,000*
- ☐ *Town or village (under 10,000 people)*
- ☐ *Rural area*

2. In which region of the province do you work?

- ☐ *Central, including greater Toronto area*
- ☐ *South-east*
- ☐ *South-west*
- ☐ *North-east (including: Nipissing, Parry Sound, Manitoulin, Sudbury, Timiskaming, Cochrane, Algoma)*
- ☐ *North-west (including: Thunder Bay, Rainy River, Kenora)*

3. Which of the following do you use on a regular basis, in either your personal or business life? Check as many as apply to you.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Computer</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Automated banking machine</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Fax machine</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>On-line access to a data system</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Electronic mail (E-mail)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Telephone answering machine</i> |

4. What is your age? Check the appropriate response.

- ☐ *18-24 years*
- ☐ *25-34 years*
- ☐ *35-49 years*
- ☐ *50-64 years*
- ☐ *65 years or more*

5. Are you female or male?

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Female</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Male</i> |
|--|--------------------------------------|

6. Are you a member of a racial minority group?

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Yes</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>No</i> |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|

7. Do you have a long-term physical or mental disability?

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Yes</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>No</i> |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|

8. What is your present job within the OPS?

- ☐ *Front line — you deal directly with the public, third parties, transfer payment agencies*
- ☐ *First line supervisor*
- ☐ *Middle manager*
- ☐ *Senior manager*
- ☐ *Support services*
- ☐ *Other*

9. In your present job, do you have internal customers within the OPS?

- ☐ *Yes, I have internal customers*
- ☐ *No, I do not have internal customers.*

Do you have any additional comments regarding the service of the Ontario government? Your suggestions and ideas for improving customer service are very important!

Thank you for your valuable time and ideas!



**YOUR VIEWS
OF ONTARIO
GOVERNMENT
SERVICE**



What do you think about the service you get from the Ontario government?

The Ontario government wants to improve the service it gives the public.

This Independent survey has been commissioned to find out what Ontario residents think and want. Please help by completing this questionnaire.

Your household was selected on a random basis. Your answers are strictly confidential, and your participation is anonymous.

The person in your household **who is 18 years of age or older and whose birthday occurs next** should complete this questionnaire.

Please return this questionnaire *no later than Wednesday July 31, 1991* in the enclosed envelope. The postage is already paid.

Thank you for your contribution!

1. Overall quality of service

Some organizations usually give good service, some may not. How good is the service that you get from each of the following organizations? (Circle the appropriate number.)

Organization	Overall Quality of Service						
	<i>Extremely Poor</i>					<i>Extremely Good</i>	
Your municipal government (city, town)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A supermarket that you go to	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The federal government (Ottawa)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The provincial government (Ontario)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A department store that you go to	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Your bank or trust company	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Canada Post	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. *Services of different governments*

The Ontario government is interested in making the public more aware of the services it provides.

Which government do you think provides each of the services below. (Check one answer in each row.)

Service	Which government provides this service?			
	<i>Municipal (town, city)</i>	<i>Provincial (Ontario)</i>	<i>Federal (Ottawa)</i>	<i>Not sure</i>
Workers' compensation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unemployment insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Birth certificates	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Immigration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Motor vehicle registration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Landlord and tenant regulations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Welfare payments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Customs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Getting information about the services of the Ontario government

You can get information about the services of the Ontario government from different sources. For each source of information below, answer the following questions:

- Do you know about this source of information?
- How many times have you used it in the past year?
- Were you satisfied with it?

If you do not know about a source of information, circle "no" and go on to the next source of information.

Source of Information	Do you know about this source?		How many times have you used it in the past year?			Were you satisfied with it?								
	Yes	No	None	1 to 3 times	4 times or more	Not at all satisfied	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Very satisfied
Blue pages in your telephone book	Yes	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Community Information Centres (CICs)	Yes	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Citizens' Inquiry Bureau, Access Ontario, Access London	Yes	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Constituency office of your MPP (Member of Provincial Parliament)	Yes	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
KWIC Index of Ontario Government Services	Yes	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Ontario Government Telephone Book	Yes	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
An 800 or Zenith number, e.g. Zenith Ontario	Yes	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

In Northern Ontario:

Ministry of Northern Development and Mines	Yes	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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4. Four types of government service

The Ontario government provides four general types of service directly to the public:

- Information
- Registration
- Financial Assistance
- Enforcement and Justice

These are the services that the Ontario government provides directly to the public — they do not include services of hospitals, schools, legal aid agencies, or other “third party” organizations.

Read the description of each type of service, then answer the questions that follow it.

INFORMATION SERVICES. Examples are:

<i>Inquiry, referral;</i>	General inquiries, consumer complaints, employment inquiries, interpretation of laws.
<i>Counselling;</i>	Vocational rehabilitation, advice to small businesses, advice to industry, apprenticeship counselling.
<i>Public awareness;</i>	Environmental issues, social services, consumer information, safe-driving campaigns.

1. How many times have you used **information services** of the Ontario government in the past year?

- ☐ None ☐ Once ☐ 2 to 5 times ☐ 6 times or more

2. Overall, how satisfied were you with the quality of service you got?

Not at all satisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very satisfied

REGISTRATION SERVICES. Examples are:

<i>Licensing, permits, certificates;</i>	Fishing licences, lotteries and bingos, births, deaths marriages, trades qualifications.
<i>Examinations, testing;</i>	Pesticide use, hunters' safety, apprenticeship programs, drivers' licences.
<i>Registration;</i>	Land registry, company names, child care facilities, firearms registration.

1. How many times have you used **registration services** of the Ontario government in the past year?

- ☐ None ☐ Once ☐ 2 to 5 times ☐ 6 times or more

2. Overall, how satisfied were you with the quality of service you got?

Not at all satisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very satisfied

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES. *Examples are:*

Grants, rebates;	Northern travel grants, Ontario Tax Credits, senior citizens' tax rebates, farm tax rebates, rent rebates.
Financial assistance;	Family Benefits Allowance, Guaranteed Annual Income Supplement for seniors, loans to business, student loans, Northern Ontario Heritage Fund.
Insurance claims;	Workers' compensation, OHIP, emergency measures claims, accidents on government property.

1. How many times have you used financial assistance services of the Ontario government in the past year?

☐ None ☐ Once ☐ 2 to 5 times ☐ 6 times or more

2. Overall, how satisfied were you with the quality of service you got?

Not at all satisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very satisfied

ENFORCEMENT & JUSTICE SERVICES. *Examples are:*

Inspections, audits, investigations;	Construction Inspections, vehicle inspections, pollution monitoring, employment standards investigations.
Debt collection, recovery of overpayments;	Student loan repayments, income maintenance overpayments, motor vehicle accident claims.
Justice;	Child custody, Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), probation and parole, human rights.

1. How many times have you used enforcement and justice services of the Ontario government in the past year?

☐ None ☐ Once ☐ 2 to 5 times ☐ 6 times or more

2. Overall, how satisfied were you with the quality of service you got?

Not at all satisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very satisfied

5. A recent experience with Ontario government service

In the box below, write the name of a recent service you got directly from the Ontario government, for example, a birth certificate, registration for your company name or landlord and tenant information.

Note: Do not use a driver's licence unless it is the only Ontario government service you got during the past year.

Do not include services of hospitals, schools, legal agencies, etc. These are not direct government services.

1. Which category best describes this service? (You can refer to pages 4 and 5 for examples of the four types of service.)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial assistance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Registration | <input type="checkbox"/> Enforcement and Justice |

2. Did you need this service for personal or business reasons?

- ☐ Personal ☐ Business ☐ Both

3. Was it a legal requirement to obtain this service? For example, you must have a licence to drive a vehicle.

- ☐ Yes, the service was a legal requirement.
☐ No, it was not.
☐ Not sure.

4. Was it an emergency?

- ☐ Yes, it was an emergency. ☐ No, it was not.

5. How many separate contacts did it take to get the service? A contact is each separate phone call, office visit, letter, etc.

- ☐ One contact ☐ 2 or 3 contacts ☐ 4 or more contacts

6. How long did the entire experience take to complete?

- ☐ Up to 1 day
☐ Up to 1 week
☐ Up to 1 month
☐ Up to 3 months
☐ More than 3 months

7. How did you receive this service? (Check a box for each option that applies.)

- ☐ You visited a government office
☐ A government representative visited your location
☐ By mail
☐ By phone
☐ By fax machine
☐ By computer: on-line access

Please describe your experience with this service:

Your experience with the service	How important was this?							How good was the Ontario government's performance?						
	<i>Not at all Important</i>			<i>Extremely Important</i>				<i>Extremely Poor</i>			<i>Extremely Good</i>			
The service was there when I needed it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Staff took pride in their work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It was easy to get to the right person and department.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Staff were courteous and helpful.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Staff were knowledgeable and competent.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Staff communicated clearly and were easy to talk to.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I got what I needed in a reasonable period of time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The staff understood my needs fully.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My confidentiality was protected.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The service was good value for my tax dollars.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Procedures were easy for me to understand and complete.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Staff were direct and gave straight answers to my questions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I received a quick response to my request.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I was given up-to-date, accurate information.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I got the same information from different people I talked to.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

If you visited a government office:

The office was in a convenient location.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The office seemed to be designed with my needs in mind.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

6. What makes good service?

What is acceptable service from the Ontario government when you:

- write
- telephone
- visit an office
- make an appointment?

When you **write** to an Ontario government office with a routine request:

How many days should it take from the time you send a letter until you receive the information you need? (Circle your choice.)

Number of days: 5 or less 6 to 10 11 to 14 15 to 19 20 to 24 25 or more

When you **telephone** an Ontario government office for a routine request:

How many rings should you have to wait before someone answers the phone?

Number of rings: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 or more

What percent of the time should you expect a busy signal when you call an Ontario government office?

Percentage of times: 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 or more

What percent of the time is it acceptable to be put on hold by the person answering?

Percentage of times: 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 or more

How many minutes is it acceptable to wait on hold?

Number of minutes: 0 1/2 1 2 3 4 5 or more

What is a reasonable number of transfers before you get to the right person?

Number of transfers: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 or more

What is an acceptable amount of time for the entire activity — from the time you dial the number until the time you hang up?

Number of minutes: 5 10 15 20 30 40 50 60 or more

What is the maximum number of people you should have to deal with to get what you need?

Number of people: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 or more

When you **visit** an Ontario government office to obtain a routine "over-the-counter" service:

How many minutes is it acceptable to wait before you first make contact with a government employee?

Number of minutes: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 or more

How many minutes is it acceptable to wait in any line-up?

Number of minutes: 1 2-4 5-9 10-14 15-19 20-29 30 or more

What is an acceptable amount of time for the entire activity — from the time you enter the office until you leave?

Number of minutes: 5 10 15 20 30 40 50 60 or more

How many different people is it acceptable to deal with to get what you need?

Number of people: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 or more

What is an acceptable amount of time for you to travel to get from your home or place of work to a government office?

Number of minutes: 5 10 15 20 30 40 50 60 or more

When you **make an appointment** with an Ontario government employee:

How many days is it acceptable to wait from the time you make the appointment until the date of the appointment?

Number of days: 1 2-4 5-9 10-14 15-19 20-29 30 or more

How many minutes is it acceptable to wait once you arrive for your appointment?

Number of minutes: 1 2-4 5-9 10-14 15-19 20-29 30 or more

What is the maximum number of people you should have to deal with in order to get what you need?

Number of people: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 or more

7. *Opinions about the service of the Ontario government*

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each statement? (Circle one number in each row.)

Opinion (based on interviews with the public)	Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree
Ontario government service keeps getting more complicated.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overall, the service of the Ontario government is getting better.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Ontario government services provide good value for taxpayers' money.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The language used in forms and documents is hard to understand.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It often seems that regulations and policies are not applied consistently.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I believe that the Ontario government treats members of the public equally, regardless of gender, age, race, culture or ability.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Staff dealing directly with the public are properly trained and qualified.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Staff are overworked and cannot give customers individual attention.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Improving the quality of service to the public should save money.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel that people in cities get better service than do people in towns and rural areas.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

8. Good service in your community

Answer the following questions about your community.

1. What type of parking should the Ontario government provide in your community?

- ☐ *Parking at a reasonable rate.*
- ☐ *Free parking.*
- ☐ *The government should not be concerned with providing parking.*

2. Should you be able to take public transportation to Ontario government offices?

- ☐ *Yes*
- ☐ *No*
- ☐ *There is no public transportation in my community.*

3. Should translation into languages other than English or French be available? (Check each type of service you think should be available in other languages.)

- ☐ *Publications*
- ☐ *Over-the-counter services*
- ☐ *Telephone inquiries*
- ☐ *No other translations should be available*

4. Office hours in most Ontario government offices are 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM. Should we extend these hours of service? (Choose one answer.)

- ☐ *Office hours should not be extended.*
- ☐ *Offices should be open one or more evenings a week.*
- ☐ *Offices should be open Saturdays.*
- ☐ *Offices should be open both one or more evenings and Saturdays.*

5. If you think that Ontario government offices should be open some evenings and/or Saturdays, are you in favour of reduced hours of service during the normal business day?

- ☐ *No, the extended hours should be in addition to present hours of operation.*
- ☐ *Yes, they could open later some weekday mornings.*
- ☐ *Yes, they could close one weekday.*

6. Should the Ontario government make services available to the public by means of automated machines? These might operate like banking machines.

- ☐ *Yes*
- ☐ *No*
- ☐ *No opinion*

7. Should the Ontario government make its on-line computer services available to the public?

- ☐ *Yes*
- ☐ *No*
- ☐ *No opinion*

8. Are you in favour of having a one-stop government centre where people can get different services in one building?

- ☐ *No: not in favour.*
- ☐ *Yes: for Ontario government services only.*
- ☐ *Yes: a single office for both provincial and municipal services.*

9. You and your household

Your answers are completely confidential. We will combine them with other peoples' answers to form general conclusions.

1. In which region of the province do you live?

- ☐ *Central, including greater Toronto area*
- ☐ *South-east*
- ☐ *South-west*
- ☐ *North-east (Including: Nipissing, Parry Sound, Manitoulin, Sudbury, Timiskaming, Cochrane, Algoma)*
- ☐ *North-west (Including: Thunder Bay, Rainy River, Kenora)*

2. Where do you presently live?

- ☐ *Metropolitan Toronto*
- ☐ *City of 100,000 people or more*
- ☐ *City of 10,000 to 100,000*
- ☐ *Town or village (under 10,000 people)*
- ☐ *Rural area*

3. What are the first three digits of your postal code?

— — —

4. Which of the following do you use on a regular basis, in either your personal or business life? (Check as many as apply to you.)

- ☐ *Computer*
- ☐ *Automated banking machine*
- ☐ *Fax machine*
- ☐ *On-line access to a data system*
- ☐ *Electronic mail (E-mail)*
- ☐ *Telephone answering machine*

5. What is your age?

- ☐ *18-24 years*
- ☐ *25-34 years*
- ☐ *35-49 years*
- ☐ *50-64 years*
- ☐ *65 years or more*

6. Are you female or male?

- ☐ *Female*
- ☐ *Male*

7. Are you a member of a racial minority group?

☐ Yes

☐ No

8. Do you have a long-term physical or mental disability?

☐ Yes

☐ No

9. What formal education do you have?

☐ Some public and/or high school

☐ Completed high school

☐ Some college or university

☐ Completed college or university

10. Which language do you prefer to use?

☐ English

☐ French

☐ English and French equally

☐ Other

11. What is your present occupation?

☐ Professional

☐ Office work, sales, service

☐ Business manager, executive, small business owner

☐ Trades, factory work

☐ Homemaker

☐ Retired

☐ Student

☐ Other

12. Are you an employee of any of the following organizations?

☐ Federal government

☐ Ontario government

☐ Municipal government

☐ No: I am not a government employee

13. Do you presently have a paid job?

☐ Yes, full time

☐ Yes, part time

☐ No

14. What is the combined income of all members of your household before taxes?

☐ Under \$10,000

☐ \$10,000 to \$29,000

☐ \$30,000 to \$49,999

☐ \$50,000 to \$69,999

☐ \$70,000 to \$89,000

☐ \$90,000 or more

Do you have any additional comments regarding the service of the Ontario government? Your suggestions and ideas for improving customer service are very important!

Thank you for your valuable time and ideas!

SERVICE QUALITY

A bibliography

31 August 1992

SERVICE QUALITY

A BIBLIOGRAPHY

This bibliography was developed in partnership with the Leadership Agenda, SMG Curriculum Work Team on Service Quality, the Customer Service Task Force and the Ontario Government Libraries Council.

Special thanks to Marilyn MacKellar, Coordinator, Library and Information Services, Ministry of Government Services.

This bibliography includes materials available within the Ontario government libraries network. It has been produced as a cooperative effort by the Ontario Government Libraries Council.

All the books and magazines listed are not found in each of our libraries. Through inter-library loan libraries within your Ministry can obtain materials they do not hold.

The list contains only books and magazine articles. In addition there are audio-visual materials available in some collections. Please ask your library for further information.

There are a number of software packages available for managing customer service. These are not listed here, but your library will also have information on these packages and access to further information on request.

This list does not claim to be complete. If you have suggestions for additions please feel free to send the information to:

**The Ontario Government Libraries Council
77 Wellesley St. W., 4th Floor
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1N3**

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